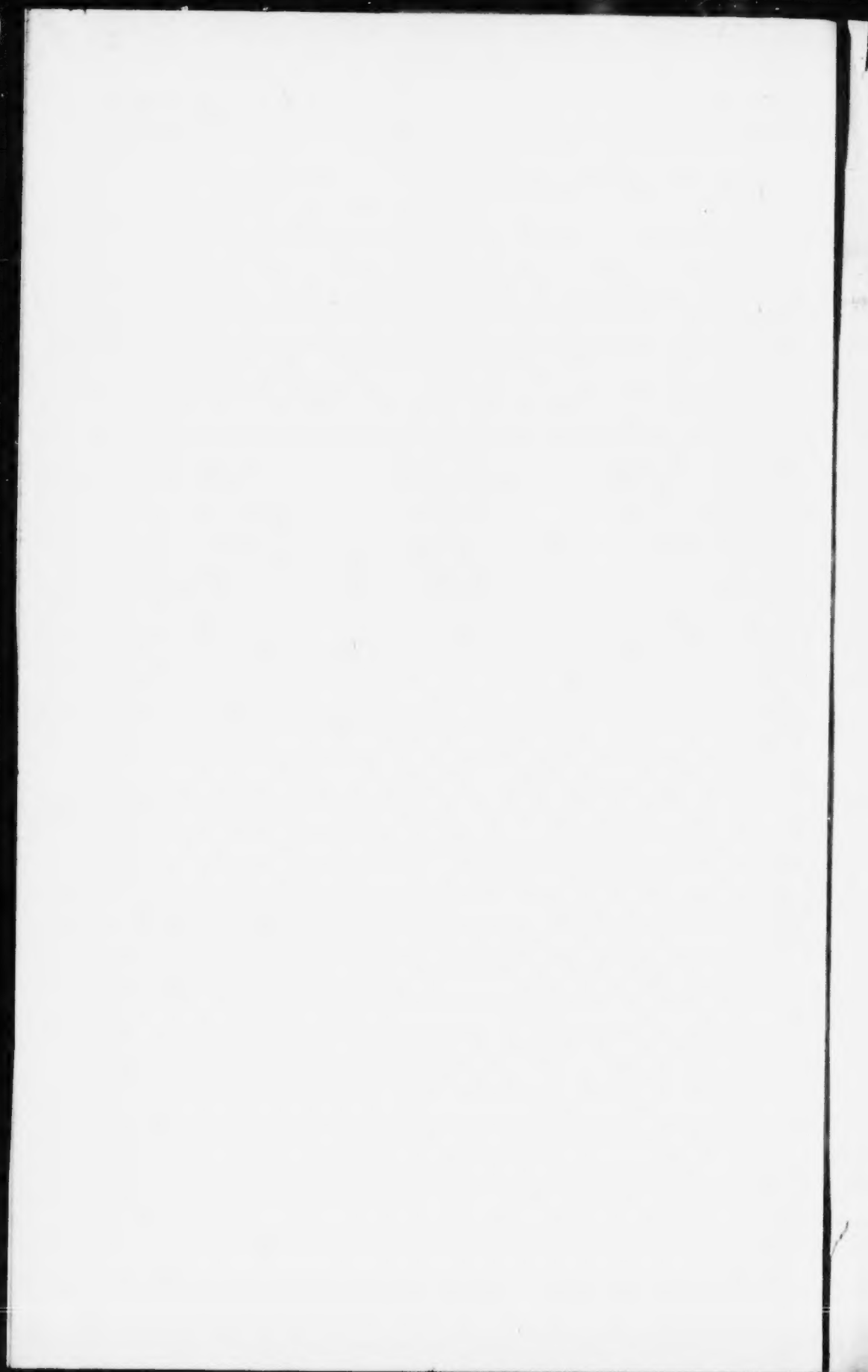




A
TREATISE
ON
BAPTISM,

AS
APPOINTED BY OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND PRACTISED BY
THE APOSTLES AND FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.

CONTAINING

A REPLY,

TO MR. ELDER'S LETTERS ON INFANT BAPTISM.

AND

A SOLEMN APPEAL,

IN FAVOR OF A SPIRITUAL CHURCH.

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TO THE MINISTERS AND MEMBERS
OF BAPTIST CHURCHES, IN NOVA-SCOTIA, NEW-BRUNSWICK
AND ELSEWHERE.

DEAR BRETHREN,

AMONG such of you as compose the churches of our denomination in these Provinces, so much Christian union has happily prevailed, that no other consideration than this need be sought for in order to justify the dedication of the following pages primarily to you. You will, I doubt not, receive with kindness the humble labours of one, who in sustaining the principles which distinguish you from other Christians, feels assured that he is engaged in the cause of the Redeemer.

But there are other grounds, which, it appears to me, render it peculiarly proper that this treatise should be expressly presented to you, and which it may be not amiss to mention.

Naturally averse to public controversy, I have been induced to undertake this labour mainly because I have been particularly requested to do so by several of the churches ; so far, therefore, these pages may be regarded as clothed with your express authority. Besides, the "series of letters" to which a reply is here offered, is addressed personally to you ; which circumstance seems especially to demand the sanction of your name to the present treatise. And when, too, we remember how exceedingly rare is a change of principle on the part of those professing our distinguishing sentiments, and that the present instance of it is therefore likely to produce some surprise and inquiry on the part both of Baptists and Pedobaptists, it seems right that a publication, intended, and, I hope, in some degree calculated, to confirm belief, and controvert error, should appear under the patronage of those churches, which, if scriptural

in their sentiments of the ordinance of baptism, may be regarded, in this respect at least, as "the pillar and ground of the truth."

To the above considerations I cannot refrain from adding that of the sincere christian affection which unites me to your body.—I love and revere, indeed, as dear brethren, all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, whatever their sentiments on subjects subordinate to the great law of charity, and of reconciliation to God ; many Pedobaptists I do most highly and affectionately cherish as those whom it is an honor to know, and whose loved society has oftentimes cheered my passage through this vale of tears ; still, I am compelled to look to the principles of Baptists, as a means essential to the *final* triumphs of the Cross—to the *complete* establishment of the reign of Messiah ; and to the churches which profess those principles in these provinces I cannot but be bound by the real christian character which many, very many of them exhibit ; by the zeal and success of their ministers in publishing "the Gospel of Salvation ;" by the seal which God has set upon their labours in the repeated effusions of His Holy Spirit to regenerate and convert the souls of men ; and by my own position among them as an humble labourer in the same portion of our Lord's vineyard.

Pardon me, dear brethren, if, in my endeavour to tell you why I feel united to you, I have seemed to say too much of myself ; and while, in conclusion, I earnestly crave your prayers on my behalf, not only that the following pages may be accompanied with God's blessing, but that in all things I may be made an "able minister of the New Testament," permit me to subscribe myself,

Your faithful servant,

and brother in christian hope and labours,

E. A. CRAWLEY.

ON BAPTISM.

PART FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

THE NEW TESTAMENT THE ONLY PROPER GUIDE TO ITS PECULIAR ORDINANCES.

IT would be easy to settle the controversy respecting Infant Baptism, if men would agree to let the New Testament decide ; for who, that had never heard of the custom of baptizing infants, and should confine his inquiries to the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists, would ever think of introducing such a practice ? On this account it is, that much resort has been had to the Old Testament, and to Ecclesiastical History, in order to prop a cause, that has been felt to be untenable in any other way. Now, this appears to us inconsistent with the dictates of common sense. It is an admitted principle of Protestants that the Bible is the *only* rule of faith and practice ; ought they not equally to admit the principle that the New Testament is the only rule of Christian ordinances ? Baptism is not a Jewish, but a Christian rite ; about which, Jesus Christ and his Apostles are much more proper instructors than Moses and the Prophets. Most people feel, at once, that there is much reason in this, and setting to work to find infant baptism in the New Testament, are astonished to see that it is not there, or can only be made out by a strained construction of a few passages which in fact do not relate to it at all. But why do they so naturally resort to the New Testament in the first instance ? Is it not because it is a principle of common sense to look for information respecting a ceremony *peculiar* to any institution, in the laws immediately relating to that Institution and not elsewhere ? Now, Baptism is an ordinance

peculiar to Christianity, and in the New Testament therefore, which is the code of Christian laws, must we look for all needful information respecting its distinguishing rites.

This case is clearly distinct from those principles of moral truth which have always belonged to religion under every dispensation, such as, love to God ; salvation by faith ; or, the moral duty of a Sabbath, a day of rest, which must continue a type of Heaven until Heaven be won ; these principles are perpetual ; they never can change. But there is no such perpetual moral duty in the application of an outward ceremony to infants. It may be right under one economy, and wrong under another. It may serve the purpose of a mixed dispensation like that of the Jews, while it may be in principle opposed to the spiritual nature of the Kingdom of Christ ; and for this reason we are bound to withhold our hand from such a ceremony unless the law of our Heavenly Master clearly enjoins it.

Taking the principle we have now stated to be correct, we shall not feel ourselves bound to pursue the course Mr. Elder has adopted, but shall go at once to the New Testament as the fountain head of information concerning baptism. At the same time, we have no disinclination to examine the argument which rests on the supposed identity of the Jewish and Christian churches. To this subject we shall give our attention after having first sought light at what we deem the only satisfactory source. Many minds we apprehend will at once perceive the correctness of this method, and will feel that to keep them back from examining the pages of the New Testament until they shall have first sought, among Jewish rites, arguments for Christian ordinances, is not only to weary them with a most unnecessary and tedious delay, but is also unfair to the subject, in as much as it first weakens the mind with perplexed and wearisome inquiries before it admits it to feed on the true sources of information.

In order to facilitate investigation we propose to collect together in the course of these pages *all the passages* in the New Testament from which it is possible to obtain any light on the two main points of inquiry, What sort of persons were baptized ; and, In what manner were they baptized ; or, in other words, Who are the proper *subjects* of this ordinance ; and, In what *mode* ought it to be administered. The next chapter shall be devoted to the evidence respecting chiefly the subjects of baptism as the rite was performed previous to Our Saviour's resurrection, together with a few brief remarks on that evidence as we proceed.

CHAPTER II.

BAPTISM PREVIOUS TO THE COMMISSION OF THE SAVIOUR TO THE
APOSTLES TO TEACH ALL NATIONS.

As the ordinance of baptism first appears in connection with the ministry of John the Baptist, the forerunner of our Lord Jesus Christ, such scriptures are first presented as relate to his mission, so far as they seem to bear on this ordinance.

** First, The divine mission of John and the design of it.*

Mark i. 1,—“ The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (John i. 6,) There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. (Mark i. 2,) As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall PREPARE THY WAY before thee. (Matt. iii. 3,) For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. (Luke i. 16,) And many of the children of Israel shall he TURN TO THE LORD THEIR GOD ; (ver. 17,) and he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just ; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. (Luke iii. 1, 2,) Now—the word of the Lord came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. (John i. 33,) He that sent me to baptize with water.”

In the above passages, we see, that the way of the Lord, that is, the approach of Christianity, or the Kingdom of Christ, was *prepared* by a change in men's feelings as respects religion, by “ turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just”—here we see the commencement of a Kingdom which was to be *spiritual*—also, we see that John was “ sent” of God “ to baptize,” that his mission and *practice* in this respect were of Divine origin.

* For the collections and disposition of these passages the writer is largely indebted to “ the Scripture Guide to Baptism,” while at the same time his own examination of the quotations enables him to vouch for their accuracy.

Secondly, John's preaching—the chief subject of it.

Matt. iii. 1, 2,—“ In those days came John the Baptist
“ preaching in the wilderness of Judæa, and saying, REPENT YE,
“ for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. (Luke iii. 3,) And
“ he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the
“ baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. (Acts,)
“ John preached the baptism of repentance to all the people of
“ Israel, (Acts xix. 4,) Saying unto the people, That they
“ should BELIEVE on him which should come after him, that
“ is, on Christ Jesus.”

Thirdly, John's Baptizing.

Mark i. 5,—“ And there went out unto him all the land
“ of Judæa, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of
“ him IN THE RIVER OF JORDAN, CONFESSING THEIR SINS. (the
“ same in Matt. iii. 6.) (Matt. iii. 7, to 12,) But when
“ he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his
“ baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who
“ hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8.
“ Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance : 9. And
“ think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our
“ father : for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones
“ to raise up children unto Abraham. 10. And now also the
“ axe is laid unto the root of the trees : therefore every tree
“ which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast
“ into the fire. 11. I indeed baptize you with water unto
“ repentance : but he that cometh after me is mightier than I,
“ whose shoes I am not worthy to “ bear : he shall baptize
“ you with the Holy Ghost and *with fire*. 12. Whose fan is
“ in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and
“ gather his wheat into the garner ; but he will burn up the
“ chaff with unquenchable fire. (Luke vii. 30,) But the
“ Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God against
“ themselves, being not baptized of him.”

In these passages we see the *progress* of that preparation for Christ's spiritual Kingdom which consisted in a change of heart. The people were exhorted to repent and believe. The exhortation was not ineffectual, for they were baptized in Jordan *confessing their sins*. This appears the character of *all* who were baptized. There is no mention of infants here, nor can we suppose they were included, as the description “ *confessing their sins* ” appears to apply to all who were baptized.

But, while the penitent were received and baptized, the impenitent were rejected. "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come."

Fourthly, Christ baptizing by his disciples, in Judæa.

John iii. 22,—“After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judæa; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. 26. And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. 27. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from Heaven. 30. He must increase, but I must decrease.” (Chap. iv. 1,) “When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John. 2. (though Jesus himself baptized not but his disciples.) 3. He left Judæa, and departed again into Galilee.”

Here it appears that the ordinance as practised by John the Baptist was the same as that performed by the Saviour through his disciples; for, the same language is used to describe both; the disciples of John seem to recognize the practice of the Saviour as the same thing that John had practised; and the expression “made and baptized—disciples,” shews that the persons baptized were such as received the instructions of the Saviour; they were not infants therefore. Nor is it probable, that the Saviour would come behind John in requiring repentance and faith, especially as it is said of him equally with John that he preached repentance. (Matt. iv. 17,) “From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent ye for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.”

CHAPTER III.

THE COMMISSION OF OUR LORD TO HIS APOSTLES TO TEACH AND BAPTIZE ALL NATIONS.

THE foregoing are all the passages that shew the sort of persons baptized previous to the resurrection of the Saviour. After that event, and just previous to his ascension, the ordinance is again brought prominently forward in his commission to the Apostles to “go and teach all nations.” That commission is as follows:

A

Matt. xxviii. 16.—“ Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. 18. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19. Go ye therefore, and TEACH all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Ghost. 20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and, lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world.”

Mark xvi. 15.—“ And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. 16. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 19. So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.”

On this passage we offer the following remarks :—1. The Apostles of our Saviour, had now for a considerable time been engaged in preaching the Gospel and baptizing converts.—Both from their own practice, therefore, as well as that of John the Baptist, they were by this time perfectly familiar with the ordinance. They had seen it administered to those who *confessed their sins*; who became *disciples*; and who, as we shall hereafter more particularly shew, were baptized by the plunging of the body in water; “ they were baptized IN THE RIVER of Jordan confessing their sins.” It must be quite apparent then that when our Saviour addressed them with the words “ Go ye and teach all nations baptizing them, &c.” the apostles must have understood him to mean, that they were to go and do, throughout the world, what they had now been doing in Judæa. What then, let us ask, had been the nature of their ministry? What had they been doing? They, like John the Baptist, had been preaching repentance and faith in the Gospel, and baptizing those who became disciples to this teaching. This then is what they must have understood their duty to be under the present commission.

2. The only additions to their duty that we can discern are the extension of their ministry to all nations, and, perhaps, the express mention of the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. As yet their ministry had been confined to Judæa; but the Saviour, knowing that all power was given unto him “ in heaven and earth,” that “ the heathen were his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth his possession,” now in express terms extends the blessings of the Gospel—the *same* blessings which Judæa had already largely enjoyed, to the

utmost bounds of the earth;—"Go ye," says he, "into all the world, and preach the Gospel," and, lest they should still confine their labours to the Jews scattered abroad, he adds the words "to every creature." "Go and teach all nations," (*panta ta ethne*,) that is, all the Gentiles; this glorious extension of his mercy however the apostles were late to perceive.

3. As the Saviour had preached, distinctly and constantly, of "the Father," of himself "the Son," and of the Holy Ghost "the comforter," we cannot suppose there was any thing *substantially* new in the direction here given, to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; it was no more than a direction to use a form consistent with doctrine of which they already knew much; although, doubtless, these truths gradually unfolded themselves with greater clearness to the minds of the apostles after the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost began more largely to exercise his office of *bringing all things to their remembrance*. It should be remembered however, that, even John baptized those who knew the Father; and who were desired to believe on him who should come after, that is the Son; and in the Holy Ghost, with or in whom the Son should baptize.

4. The foregoing considerations render it quite immaterial whether we *call* John's baptism Christian baptism or not; it was the same as Christ himself practised by his apostles, (a fact of which Mr. Elder takes no manner of notice;) and what they practised was plainly what he now enjoins them to continue to practise throughout the world. What right have we to say that they now added the baptism of infants to the baptism of penitent believers; the passage does not say so. And if we should allow from Acts xix. 1. the case of the Ephesians, (the meaning of which however is doubted,) that they re-baptized John's disciples, it gives no proof that they re-baptized their own, nor does it afford the least proof that they altered the ordinance from what it had been before, viz. the immersion of believers in water on their repentance and faith. But moreover the language of the commission expressly forbids such a construction of this passage.

First.—It is impossible to read it without perceiving that the Apostles were first to teach, then to baptize, and further to continue to instruct in all that Christ had commanded. The word teach (*matheteusate*) which first occurs in the passage signifies, as all allow, to make disciples or scholars. Who does not see the absurdity of applying this word to infants? There is no authority, except that of Mr. Elder, for giving the word

the sense of To make a proselyte ; *poiesai proselyton* is the expression used in Matt. 23. 15, in that sense. A disciple or scholar is of course one who learns ; his character must depend on the nature of the doctrine he is taught. In this case, that doctrine is the Gospel ; this requires repentance and faith in its disciples ; and in the sense therefore in which our Saviour used this word, it means one who learns the Gospel, one who by faith is made a scholar in the school of Christ. "Go preach the Gospel" he says "to every creature," he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved—his disciples are "the saved," of such the Lord afterwards added to the church daily. They were those who in obedience to the apostolic direction, had saved themselves, by faith, "from an unlearned generation." *

Secondly,—The language in Mark xvi. evidently contains an account of precisely the same commission as that in Matthew. It is the language of a different witness recording the same transaction. It must therefore be taken as explanatory of Matthew's meaning. What that meaning is, it leaves no room to doubt. What Matthew calls "teaching all nations," Mark describes by the words "Go preach the Gospel to every creature," while the words of Mark "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," are explanatory of these words of Matthew, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, &c." plainly those are intended who on hearing the Gospel preached should believe. Faith would make them disciples and scholars in the school of Christ, and entitle them to baptism.

Thirdly,—The direction in Matthew to continue instruction, "teaching them to observe all things," shews that the eye of the Saviour is still directed to those who should become his disciples by faith, to those capable of learning. The passage then in every point of view excludes the idea of infant baptism.

CHAPTER IV.

INSTANCES OF BAPTISM RECORDED IN THE ACTS, ALLUSIONS IN JOHN iii. &c.

All the instances of baptism which follow the Commission of our Saviour, will be found to harmonize perfectly with the

* See more on this subject in Chapter VII.

preceding testimony and the remarks which have been offered upon it. To those instances we now refer our readers.

1. *Baptism at the Feast of Pentecost.*

Acts ii. 37.—“ Now when they heard *this*, they were
“ pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest
“ of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?
“ 38. Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized
“ every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remis-
“ sion of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
“ 39. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and
“ to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God
“ shall call. 40. And with many other words did he testify
“ and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward gen-
“ eration. 41. Then they that gladly received his word were
“ baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them*
“ about three thousand souls. 42. And they continued stead-
“ fastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in break-
“ ing of bread, and in prayers. 43. And fear came upon every
“ soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the Apos-
“ tles. 44. And all that believed were together, and had all
“ things common. 45. And sold their possessions and goods
“ and parted them to all *men* as every man had need. 46. And
“ they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and
“ breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with
“ gladness and singleness of heart. 47. Praising God, and
“ having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to
“ the Church daily such as should be saved.”

It is almost needless to call the attention of our readers to the prominent features of this passage as it bears on the present question. It is apparent that the persons baptized are represented as first visited with deep compunction; as excited to earnest enquiry; and as gladly receiving the word. No others are mentioned; no servants or dependants of the believers; no infants; and, finally, the description closes with representing the daily additions to the church to consist of such as should be saved, or more literally “ the saved.” In what sense could this be said of baptized infants? How many of them prove themselves by their subsequent lives to be among the lost!—See more on this passage particularly as respects the expression “ to you and to your children,” in Chapter VII.

2. *Philip baptizing at Samaria.*

Acts viii. 5.—“ Then Philip went down to the city of Sa-

"maria, and preached Christ unto them. 6. And the people
 "with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip
 "spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. 8. And
 "there was great joy in that city. 12. But when they believed
 "Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God,
 "and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men
 "and women."

No comment need be made on this passage further than to call attention to the preparation made for baptism in this case, it was "when they believed" that they were baptized; and to the expression "both men and women." Is it not inconceivable, that, if infants were baptized also, the sacred historian would have omitted to say, men, women and children? *

3. *The baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch.*

Acts viii. 35.—"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. 36. And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here* is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37. And Philip said, *if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.* And he answered, and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 38. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."

No comment can make this passage plainer than it is. The eunuch is first instructed, agreeably to the Saviour's commission, and when he declares his faith in Christ, is baptized; for which purpose, they both descend into the water; and, when the action of baptism is performed, they both come up out of the water. It is impossible to read these words without feeling assured that some abundant use of water, like bathing or plunging, must have induced them thus to descend into it. It ought not to be overlooked, in reading this passage, that Philip distinctly makes cordial faith requisite to baptism, "if thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest."

4. *The baptism of Paul, also of Cornelius and his friends.*

The case of Paul will be distinctly remembered as of one

* See note A at the end.

first instructed by a heavenly vision and afterwards by Ananias. That of Cornelius is found in Acts x. 1, "There was a certain man in Cæsarea called Cornelius. 2. *A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house.*" To him Peter went, being divinely instructed by a vision to go, and preached the word of God, when the narration proceeds. (44 v.) "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47. Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48. And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."

Here as in the other cases the commission of the Saviour is strictly fulfilled. They are taught and then baptized. From the baptism of households, some endeavour to argue infant baptism. Here is a household that believed—will they from this argue infant faith?

5. *The Baptism of Households.*

The following cases of baptism, being those of households, are constantly referred to as containing evidence of infant baptism. Let the reader examine them with care; and then judge whether there is any thing stated in any of them that should lead us to believe that infants were baptized in opposition to the clear terms of the Saviour's commission.

First, The Baptism of Lydia and her household.

Paul and Silas being sent to Macedonia, to preach the Gospel, arrived at Philippi a chief city of that country, where their labours and success are described as follows:—

Acts xvi. 13.—"And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. 14. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there. And she constrained us."

The imprisonment of Paul and Silas is then related, after which the history thus proceeds, (40 v) "And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, THEY COMFORTED THEM and departed."

Still the terms of Christ's commission are observed—Lydia's heart is opened, she attends to the things spoken, and so is baptized. As she was a travelling merchant, and no mention is made of her husband, it is quite as probable that she had no infant children, as that she had them—her household probably consisted of servants employed in her business, but whether her family contained children and servants, or not, we cannot suppose that the apostles would baptize in a manner inconsistent with the terms of the commission; "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them &c." That there were brethren in her house whom the apostles comforted appears from the 40 v. these certainly were not infants.

Secondly, The baptism of the Philippian Jailer and his household.

Acts xvi. 29.—"Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas. 30. And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31. And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shall be saved, and thy house. 32. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, AND TO ALL THAT WERE IN HIS HOUSE. 33. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. 34. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and REJOICED, BELIEVING IN GOD WITH ALL HIS HOUSE.

No one of course supposes that the jailer's household was saved by his faith. It is equally apparent, that they were not baptized on his faith alone. Paul and Silas "spake" not only to him "but to all that were in his house," who united also with the head of the family in his joy and faith. It is clear then, that "all his" who were baptized were such as were spoken to, rejoiced, and believed.

Thirdly, The baptism of Stephanas and his household.

This is alluded to by Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, in the following manner:

1 Cor. i. 13.—"Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified

"for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? 14. "I thank God I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius: 15. Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. 16. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. 17. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel."

1 Cor. xvi. 15.—"Ye know the household of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints."

As the whole household of Stephanas are here represented as having addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, the probability would be, even if we knew nothing of the practice of the Apostles in other instances, that when baptized they were persons capable of faith; For, it would be far less likely that the infants among them, if there were any at the time of the baptism, would grow up to be religious, and to devote themselves to the business of ministering to the saints, than that those should do so who were baptized as adult believers. Besides, this is only the *first* epistle to the Corinthians, and probably written at no great length of time after the baptism of Stephanas and his family; so that the infants would hardly be grown up sufficiently to addict themselves to the ministry of the saints.

On the whole, it is observable, that not one of the cases of the households affords any *proof* that infants were baptized; no mention is made in these instances of infants, nor any allusion to them; on the contrary, each of the accounts is accompanied with some notice concerning those who were baptized in the households, that could not be true of infants; they either were comforted; rejoiced and believed; or addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. At the same time it should be borne in mind that if the Apostles practised according to the terms of the Saviour's commission, which, as we have seen, was to *make disciples* or scholars and baptize, it matters not though we *certainly knew* that there were infants in the households.—For we must in such case necessarily understand by the baptism of a household, the baptism of such members of it only as became disciples.

Fourthly. Baptisms at Corinth and at Ephesus.

There remain but two cases of baptism to be considered; the first occurred at Corinth, under the ministry of Paul.

Acts xviii. 4.—"And he reasoned in the synagogue

"every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. 5. "And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, "Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews that "Jesus was Christ. 8. And Crispus, the chief ruler of the "synagogue BELIEVED on the Lord WITH ALL HIS HOUSE ; and "many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."

Another instance of a household which believed on the Lord ! Must we take it for granted that there were infants in it and that they also believed ? If not, why in other cases suppose they were baptized, when baptism in our Lord's commission and in every other instance is connected with instruction and faith ?

The other Corinthians are a clear instance of strict compliance with the tenor of our Lord's commission ; that runs "teach all nations baptizing them, &c." In this instance the Corinthians *hearing believed, and were baptized.*

The case at Ephesus is as follows :—

Acts xix. 1.—"Paul having passed through the upper "coasts, came to Ephesus : and finding certain disciples, "2. He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost "since ye believed ? And they said unto him, We have not "so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. 3. And "he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized ? And "they said, Unto John's baptism. 4. Then said Paul, John "verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto "the people, That they should believe on him which should "come after him, that is, on Jesus Christ. 5. When they "heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord "Jesus. 6. And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, "the Holy Ghost came on them ; and they spake with tongues "and prophesied. 7. And all the men were about twelve."

This passage will of course be recognized as uniting with all the previous testimony now adduced, in shewing, that the practice of the apostles agreed wholly with their divine warrant, the commission of the Saviour. The persons baptized on this occasion, first received instruction, and believed. It is needless to add that they possessed *real, saving* faith ; a false or hypocritical profession, a case like that of Simon Magus must necessarily have been comparatively rare in that day of danger and persecution. That there were no infants in this case is quite apparent, all who were baptized conversed with Paul ; heard and understood the words he spake ; received the Holy

Ghost ; spake with tongues and prophesied ; being "about twelve" "men."

Fifthly, Allusions to Baptism.

Gal. iii. 26.—"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ."

Here being "the children of God by faith," is synonymous with having "put on Christ" by baptism, which never could be said unless baptism was always, at least to all human appearance, accompanied by faith. In this instance, then, distinct allusion is made to baptism as practised in accordance with the Saviour's commission to teach, or make disciples, by faith, and then baptize ; and it may further be remarked that as the churches in Galatia must, if pedobaptist principles be true, have had very many infant members, whose baptism was of course in such case unaccompanied by faith ; it cannot be supposed that the apostle would thus allude to faith as a universal concomitant of baptism ; or that he would address the Galatians as *all* being the children of God by faith, when on those principles, very many of them would be the children of God only by baptism, and not by faith.

The quotations now made contain all the passages where baptism is mentioned, from which any information is to be gathered respecting the present inquiry ; there remain however several other cases of allusion to the ordinance, although not always by its usual name baptism, which may require some notice.—They are as follows :

John iii. 5.—"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."

Ephesians v. 25.—"Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it ; 26. That he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word."

Titus iii. 5.—"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

1 Peter iii. 21.—"The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

These passages can only be pressed into the service of infant baptism by those who hold the dangerous and unscriptural doctrine of infant regeneration. Such persons say, that if no man enters the kingdom of heaven but by being born of water; if Christ sanctifies his church by the washing of water; and infants dying in infancy are saved; then, they must be born of water too; they must be baptized. This was doubtless the erroneous interpretation of scripture which first prepared the way for infant baptism: its distinct and conclusive refutation is contained in the last of the above cited passages—"Baptism doth now save us;" how triumphant a proof of baptismal regeneration this would have been, had not the apostle, unluckily for the believers in it, gone on to say, what affords a proof equally triumphant on the other side "not the putting away the filth of the flesh," not the external ordinance, the outward sign, but the inward grace which it signified; that is to say "the answer of a good conscience towards God." This is the key that unlocks the difficulty in every other case; and it shews us beyond a question, that baptism is put in the several other instances above cited, either for the spiritual thing which, as a sign, it represented; or, in connection with the spiritual grace, because the one always accompanied the other in the practice of the first churches, making allowance however for the mistakes of judgment to which those who are called upon to decide on christian character must always be liable.

CHAPTER V.

ACTS XIX. 1. &c. JOHN'S BAPTISM—ITS CONNECTION WITH THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

Critics have differed on the question, whether the persons mentioned in the passage cited from Acts xix. 1. &c. were baptized by Paul. The question depends on a nice construction of Greek particles, with which it is needless to trouble a common reader. If the words in verse 5, "When they heard this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," refer to these disciples at Ephesus, then, it is apparent, that they were baptized a second time; but if they refer to those whom John baptized, then, it is equally apparent, that this account contains no mention of a second baptism. It is immaterial, however, to the present inquiry to decide this question. If the

apostles, by virtue of the Saviour's commission baptized again all John's disciples who believed in Christ, still as we have already shewn (page 10,) baptism itself is the same thing; unless the words of the commission produced a change in the ordinance, the apostles must necessarily have interpreted the Saviour's meaning by their own previous practice, and that of John. But we have already seen that those words produced no change, either in respect of the persons to be baptized, or the act of baptism. As it would therefore be altogether irrelevant to the subject of the present treatise, and wearisome to the reader, to undertake a lengthened discussion of the character of John's baptism, and whether it ought to be considered as Christian baptism or not, we shall merely offer one or two suggestions which may serve to place the subject in its proper light.

John's ministry was connected with the *beginning* of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, for so Mark in the first of the above cited passages expressly asserts, (Mark i. 1.) It was surely then a Christian, not a Jewish ordinance. Again, he was sent of God to baptize, (John i. 33.) He *prepared the way* of the Lord. (Matt. iii. 3.) He desired the people to believe on Christ. (Acts xix. 4.)

Moreover, we learn that in the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven, that is, the special reign of Christ had begun; for our Saviour himself, speaking of his kingdom, says, "From the days of John the Baptist UNTIL NOW, the kingdom of heaven SUFFERETH violence, and the violent TAKE IT by force;" (Matt. xi. 12.) And again, even more plainly if possible, he says, "The Law and the Prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man [that is every sincere disciple,] PRESSETH INTO IT." (Luke xvi. 16.) These passages are so strong and conclusive that they compel us to interpret in harmony with them any others that might seem at first sight to be opposed. For instance, the phrase "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," must imply an *actual* commencement; and that expression of our Saviour in reference to John the Baptist "he that is least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he" must contain a comparison between the "extraordinary prophetic endowments of John" and the graces or virtues of spiritual religion. "*Among those born of woman there was not a greater prophet than John the Baptist,*" (Luke vii. 28.) Nevertheless, the Saviour seems to say, "regard not too much the honors of a prophet, but prize more highly still the ornament of piety. He that is least in the kingdom

of heaven is greater than John, so far as his prophetic dignity is concerned. John himself is more to be esteemed for his piety, than for his great name as a prophet."

From these considerations, we must necessarily regard John, in his ministry and baptism, as a servant in Christ's kingdom. He was no minister of the Jewish dispensation. That kingdom, which was as a grain of mustard seed at first, had its incipient state in the ministry of John; it began to spread into a tree, at the feast of Pentecost, when the "three thousand," and the "five thousand," the daily additions "of such as should be saved," and the "multitudes" of believers, "both men and women," "were added" "unto the church," and "unto the Lord;" until at length, so great was its increase, that the fowls of the air lodged in its branches."

Now, whatever the practice of John was in regard to baptism, such was the practice of Jesus Christ by his apostles, and such also was that which the Saviour afterwards extended to all nations; the only difference in the ordinance, after the resurrection, so far as the pages of the New Testament afford any information, consisting in the greater development of light, and spiritual assistance, afforded at and after Pentecost, and the use of the formula "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

If, therefore, it be admitted, that John did not baptize infants, (see Mr. Elder's letter V.) it follows, that the church began to be formed without infant baptism; that infants were not baptized either by Christ, or afterwards by his apostles; and that so the church continued to grow without infant baptism, a fact which all its subsequent history in the New Testament confirms; consequently, if the disciples baptized by John were indeed re-baptized by the apostles, still, this circumstance cannot afford the slightest evidence for infant baptism, in as much as the apostles taught and baptized, in like manner as John the Baptist, and they, under their divine master, had been previously wont to do, making allowance only for the express mention of the Sacred Three at baptism, and the clearer and more evangelical character of their instructions.

In conclusion, one or two thoughts on Acts xix. 1. &c. may serve to throw some additional light on this subject. If these Ephesian disciples were really baptized again by Paul, may not their extreme ignorance have made it necessary.— "We have not so much as heard," say they "whether there be any Holy Ghost." This seems a grievous amount of ignorance in the disciples of John the Baptist, for he made the doc-

trine of the Holy Ghost a prominent feature in his teaching ; " I indeed" said he " baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I—he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." But, again, they were ignorant it would seem of the duty of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, for Paul proceeds in the second verse to inform them as of a truth which they did not know, that John taught the people to believe " in him that should come after him"—that is on Jesus Christ. Some idea of the duty of repentance seems to have been the amount of their knowledge. May not the question well be raised, Whether any class of christians in the present day would consider a man duly baptized who should be ignorant at the time of his baptism, of the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, and the duty of faith in Christ ?

Is there not also just room to question whether these disciples, since they were thus ignorant of the truths John taught, and resided at Ephesus so far away from Judæa, had not been baptized by some of John's disciples, and not by John himself. And, in that case, (even if a baptism by John's disciples would have been valid,) whether this circumstance does not confirm and explain the fact of their great ignorance ? The apostolic commission was to make disciples and baptize. These Ephesian converts were disciples to the doctrine of repentance, but can scarcely be called disciples to Christianity.

CHAPTER VI.

GENERAL REVIEW OF THE FOREGOING SCRIPTURAL TESTIMONY;
BELIEVERS ONLY BAPTIZED ; HIGHLY IMPROBABLE THAT
INFANTS WOULD BE OMITTED ; THE COMMISSION ; EX-
AMPLE OF THE SAVIOUR ; THE CHURCH SPIRITUAL.

Having in the preceding Chapters brought to view all the passages in the New Testament where baptism is mentioned or alluded to, which cast any light on the question, Who are the proper subjects of this ordinance, we cannot refrain from expressing our earnest hope that the reader has carefully examined them. They are thus selected from the sacred volume not for the purpose of withholding him from further research, but to lead him to it. We hope he has read them with candour, and with prayer, not only in our pages, but in the pages of his

bible. He has here, so far as we have been able to discover, *the whole of the evidence*, contained in the New Testament, that touches on the proper subjects of baptism, in the way either of example, precept, or allusion. He cannot but perceive that this testimony is neither obscure nor scanty. These passages are God's witnesses for his holy ordinance of baptism arrayed before us, and in view of this array, we would solemnly ask our readers, What is the answer you hear from their lips? Whatever it be, it is the New Testament language concerning its own ordinance, it is the statement of the Holy Ghost, of Christ, and of God. The following review of the evidence may possibly assist inquiry.

1. The above cited cases, amounting to eighteen, contain, to the best of our knowledge, *every example* of baptism, and *every precept or allusion* where the ordinance is mentioned. from which any light can be gathered as to its proper subjects; and in every one of these, *religious affections*—so far as men could judge of them, *such as instruction received with the heart, repentance or faith*, are shewn to have been *always connected with the ordinance*; always made necessary to it by precept, accompanying it in the example given, or referred to, as thus connected, in the allusions. In making this examination, every one must, we think, have been struck with the multitude of these instances. The sacred writers have been careful to shew, that the subjects of baptism, the persons to whom this ordinance was administered, were first made the subjects of various mental and moral influences. They heard the word preached; they were exhorted to repent, (Matt. iii. 1. &c.) ; the baptism preached to them was called the baptism of repentance, (Luke iii. 3.) ; they were required to believe on him that should come—that is Jesus Christ, (Acts xix. 4.) ; they confessed their sins, (Matt. iii. 3.) ; they were made disciples, (John iv. 1.) ; they were pricked to the heart; they enquired “what shall we do to be saved;” they “gladly received the word;” they continued steadfast in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, (Acts ii. 37. &c.) ; The Samaritans “gave heed” to the things spoken by Philip; “they believed” his preaching, (Acts viii. 6. &c.) ; To the eunuch, cordial faith was made an express test “if thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest,” he believed that Jesus was the Son of God and was baptized, (Acts viii. 37.) ; Saul heard Ananias saying unto him “Brother Saul the Lord even Jesus—hath sent me that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost—and he received sight and arose and was baptized, (Acts ix. 17. 18.) ; On Cornelius and his friends, when they heard the word, the Holy Ghost fell—so that they spake with

tongues and magnified God, (Acts x. 44, 46.) ; The Ephesians when they heard what Paul spake were baptized, and spake with tongues and prophesied, (Acts xix. 5, 6.) ; The Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized, (Acts xviii. 8.) ; Of Lydia, it is said " whose heart the Lord opened, that she gave heed to the things spoken by Paul ; of her household (apparently,) that they were comforted, (Acts xvi. 14, 40.) ; Of the Philippian Jailer, we read that he inquired with evident earnestness, " Sirs what must I do to be saved ;" both of him and of his household, that they rejoiced, believing in God, (Acts xvi. 30, 34.) ; Of the household of Stephanas, that they had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, (1 Cor. xvi. 15.) ; and finally of the churches of Galatia, that they were all the children of God by faith inasmuch as they had been baptized. Thus in every case of baptism mentioned in the New Testament, in which is found any description of the persons receiving the ordinance, we see the baptized in possession, so far as man could judge, of religious affections.

2. It follows, and is equally apparent, that in the whole of this mass of scriptural testimony respecting the persons baptized, *there is not a single instance of infant baptism*, nor any necessary or even probable implication that it was practised. Pressed by the weight of evidence so powerful and so conclusive, the advocates of pedobaptism will cry, For what use this array of proof that *adults* were baptized, this we admit, but then we affirm that infants were baptized also. Many of our readers, we doubt not, will readily supply the answer. True, some instances of the baptism of believers will not prove that none others were baptized, but we stop not there ; we first look at the Saviour's commission, and from that we learn that none but believers ought to be baptized ; we next look minutely at every instance of baptism, and find that in *not one* of these is any mention made of infants being baptized. Was ever proof more complete than this ?

But, say pedobaptists, households were baptized, and *perhaps* households contained infants ? Well, *perhaps* they did ; and *perhaps* they did not. Should I be justified in doing what *perhaps* was done, when in such case, too, I must omit altogether to do what was *really* done. But then the evidence before us will not allow us to say so much as this, that *perhaps* infants in those households were baptized, because first, we cannot believe that when the Saviour desired his apostles to go and teach all nations baptizing them, they would go and baptize any without teaching them. Secondly, because they doubtless

would have felt it to be inconsistent with the *spiritual nature* of the church of Christ, in which "*all*" were to "*know the Lord from the least to the greatest.*" Thirdly, because the persons described as baptized in the households are also described as "*believing,*" "*rejoicing,*" "*being comforted,*" or "*addicted to the ministry of the saints.*" Because fourthly, no one concludes when he reads of Cornelius fearing God with all his house, (Acts x. 2) ; or of Crispus "*believing on the Lord with all his house,*" (Acts xviii. 8.) that in either of these cases their infants, if they had any, *perhaps* they had, feared God or believed on the Lord. And fifthly, because there are so many instances of baptism related, in which it is impossible to suppose but that some, nay many, very many of the persons baptized had infant children, and yet *no mention* whatever is made of them ; not when the *three thousand* and the *five thousand* at the season of Pentecost were baptized ; not when the sacred historian informs us that the Lord added to the church *daily* such as should be saved, (Acts ii. 47.) ; not when he tells us that believers were the more added to the Lord, *multitudes* both men and women, (Acts v. 14.) ; not when at Samaria "*the people believed Philip's preaching—and were baptized both men and women;*" not in any one of the numerous instances of baptism by John, by the Saviour through his apostles, or by the apostles themselves, either at Jerusalem ; at Samaria ; at Cæsarea ; at Philippi ; at Corinth ; or at Ephesus.

3. A distinct and prominent head of remark in reviewing the evidence before us ought to be the commission of the Saviour. While the historical *fact*, that infant baptism was not practised, can only be shewn by adducing *every case* of the performance of the ordinance, or of allusion to it ; the commission of the Saviour furnishes direct proof that it *ought not* to be practised ; that, if used, it would be either *another ordinance* altogether, or else, inconsistent with the terms of the divine appointment. Those terms were, *To teach* all nations baptizing them, &c. To preach the Gospel to every creature ; with the assurance, that, he that believed and was baptized should be saved ; in a word the terms of that commission were that *those who should become disciples* of the Lord by faith should be baptized, which necessarily implies that *no others* should receive the ordinance. [See on this head Chap. III.]

4. In the review which we are now making it would be wrong to pass without remark, the example of our Lord himself. Can we doubt that he "*thus fulfilled all righteousness,*" as our high Example ? For what other purpose was he bap-

tized ? In the infancy of his kingdom, by the hand of his servant " who was not worthy to loose the latchet of his shoes," he was humbled into this likeness of the death and burial which he afterwards underwent, that all his disciples might behold the lamb of God and follow him. No cavilling about a supposed difference between John's baptism and the baptism of the apostles touches this question. Granted, that baptism was afterwards administered under a clearer Gospel light, was it therefore not *Christian* baptism before ? When Christ baptized by his apostles, was that too not *christian* baptism ? What was it then ? Was it Jewish baptism ? No, it was the baptism of Christ's dawning empire ; of a kingdom already begun ; a baptism which with the general increase of light that the Sun of righteousness spread as he rose, may afterwards have been more explicitly administered in the name of the sacred Three, but which nevertheless stood as a pattern of the baptism of the kingdom of Christ in all ages, sealed with the example of the Saviour himself.

And was Christ not baptized in his *own name* ? [see Elder page 35,] Yes, surely in his own name. God does every thing in his own name, all he does centers in his own glory ; and Christ in his own name set this example, that we, in his name, might obey ; that in this as in all things we might seek the glory of God.

And let it be remembered that the Saviour's baptism was adult baptism ; he was not now an unconscious infant. It was also believer's baptism, for Christ believed in God his Father. Nay more, it was in an important, though not a literal sense the baptism of penitent believers. For the Lord is *our righteousness*. His birth, his baptism, his faith, his holy life, his sufferings and his death, his resurrection and his glorious ascension, are all equally for penitent believers.

Moreover, if the baptism of Christ was intended to set an example to all his followers, and infant baptism be a duty, can any reason be imagined why the angel who announced his birth, and that of his forerunner, and who brought from heaven particular directions respecting the name of both, should have given no instructions respecting the baptism of either John or Jesus in their infancy ?

5. If therefore in summing up the evidence furnished by the foregoing passages, the New Testament itself should be heard in answer to the question, Who were baptized in the apostles day ? or, in other words, What was the rite of baptism as practised in the New Testament Church ? The reply

must plainly be to the following effect, It was an ordinance administered to persons *taught* the word of God, and thereby brought to possess the *various religious affections* which are described in the passages above quoted, and to *no other sort of persons*. These passages exhibit baptism as an act of *religious obedience* in the persons who partook of it, *in no other point of view*. Dare I so change it as that the persons whom it is administered shall have no sympathy with the *sacred rite* ; no understanding of what is done ; no religious affection in exercise ? But this I plainly do if I baptize an infant. Why not then an idiot ? Why not a slave or a prisoner who dare not resist ? Strange, that men in a matter of such solemn moment as obedience to Christ in this sacred ordinance, should be content to think that others may obey or believe for them ! The Jew, when circumcised, ever bore in his own flesh the evidence that the divine injunction had been complied with. What proof has the person baptized as an infant of his obedience ? A sorry answer to make at the Judgment seat, that he *supposes* he obeyed the command of his Saviour, he *supposes* he was baptized ; and yet this is the only answer that Mr. Elder, the present champion for infant baptism, pretends to have ; on page 84 he tells us “ I was I *suppose* baptized in infancy by sprinkling.”

6. Having now seen, from the New Testament itself, that infant baptism is no where mentioned or alluded to as practised in the first churches, and is evidently *excluded* by the terms of the Saviour's commission ; we may further add, that it also is wholly inconsistent with the character of the christian dispensation as distinguished from the Jewish. The Jews were the people of God, *as a nation* ; The blessings connected with this high honor were secured to them on condition of their obedience to “ the law of carnal ordinances.” God, indeed, required them to believe in Him, and to love Him ; none could be finally saved without vital religion, the religion of the heart ; but none were *cut off from the nation* for the want of vital religion ; For this God finally cast off the *whole nation*, except only those who were found to possess it ; but the Mosaic economy made no such provision ; on the contrary, if they sinned, in most cases, except where the sin was a civil offence, a sacrifice presented at the temple was a sufficient atonement to preserve their temporal privileges as Jews ; and consistently, therefore, with the character of this imperfect dispensation, admission to its advantages was obtained solely by descent, accompanied in the case of male infants with the rite of circumcision, a mark in the flesh, as a token of God's promise to bless

them as a nation, and of their duties in consequence ; and which, too, should distinguish them from the surrounding nations. How different from this is the church of Christ ; this, according to the divine plan is to be wholly spiritual, " God seeketh such to worship him as worship in spirit and in truth." All the members of this church, are to be taught of the Lord from the least to the greatest, (Heb. viii. 6.) ; *So it had been expressly foretold*, (Jer. xxxi. 31, 34.) This church as we learn also from the last cited passages was to be established on a " new " and " better covenant," than that of old, consisting of an express promise on the part of the Almighty, " to put " his " law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts ; " a promise altogether different from that on which the Jewish privileges were founded. And accordingly, we see the first churches formed of these, in whom the law of God *was thus written*, " As many as GLADLY RECEIVED the word were baptized," (Acts ii. 41) " And the Lord added unto the church daily SUCH AS SHOULD BE SAVED," (47 v.) The powerful nature of that influence, which fulfilled this ancient prophecy to the members of the churches, is continually adverted to by the sacred writers. (Eph. iii. 20.) " Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly—according to THE POWER THAT WORKETH IN US—be glory." (Colos. ii. 10, 11.) " That ye may walk worthy of the Lord—strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power ; " (2 Thes. i. 11) " Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would fulfil—the work of faith with power ; " (2 Tim. i. 7.) " For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind ; " (Acts xvi. 14.) " Whose heart THE LORD OPENED that she attended unto the things spoken by Paul ; " (John iii. 3.) " Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John i. 12, 13.) " But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name : which were born not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God ; " (Philip. ii. 12, 13.) " Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling : For it is God that WORKETH IN you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." And so in a multitude of places, which we have not now room to insert, but which the reader may easily collect for himself ; all which go to shew, what was the nature of that new covenant to which we have already referred, and in what manner it was fulfilled. Thus "in those days," that is, in the days of the Christian dispensation, God actually did write his law in the heart. All those who received this divine teaching and influence became the

true children of Israel, in whose behalf that ancient promise of a new covenant was given ; these became the people of God, the church of Christ, of whom the ancient Israel was typical indeed, but with whom they possessed *as a nation* no spiritual resemblance. This the apostle Paul has distinctly shewn.—In Gal. iii. 7. he writes, “ Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham ;” So, also, in Rom. iv. 13, “ For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith ;” and again (chap. ix. 8,) “ They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God : but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” That is, the seed, or offspring of Abraham who should inherit the spiritual promises of God, were not the natural descendants of Abraham, but those, who were regarded as his children, because of their possessing *like faith* with him. Now, let it be remembered, that the promise in Jeremiah, fulfilled, as we have seen, so wonderfully on the day of Pentecost, and fulfilled still, wherever a soul is converted to God by faith in Christ, is made expressly to *Israel*. (Jer. xxxi. 33.) “ But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel—saith the Lord.” Where then is that nation with which this covenant was made? Who are members of this house of Israel? Evidently those, and those only, in whose heart the law is written ; who gladly receive the word ; who are born again ; who become as little children. Of such only, so far as the imperfect instruments employed were able to discern, did the Lord add to the church, in its first formation ; of such only ought churches now to be formed.

The mistake made by pedobaptists when they argue infant baptism from the rite of circumcision, consists in overlooking the exclusively typical character of the Jewish church, and taking it, not only as a *type*, but as a *pattern* of Christian churches. As we have seen, God has now a people or nation, as he had of old, but, they were then *actually* a nation, now they are so only *figuratively*. Then, his people were sealed with circumcision ; so are they now, but it is the circumcision of which that was a type, the circumcision which is “ made without hands,” and consists in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, (Colos. ii. 11.) Christians now become, as did the Jews, members of this nation or people of God, *as children* ; but the Jews were so actually and by descent, Christians are so only figuratively, and by faith. The character of the Jewish dispensation therefore required the admission of infants ; that of the Christian requires the admission only of those who

shall humble themselves as a little child, (Matt. xviii. 4.); and consequently, if there be any resemblance between circumcision and baptism, it consists solely in this, that as all who were Abraham's offspring by descent were entitled to be circumcised, and thereby admitted to all the privileges of the Jewish nation; so all who by *faith* are made "the children of faithful Abraham," are thereby entitled to be baptized, and accordingly admitted to all the rights of membership in the church of Christ. In a word the dominion, of the Messiah was to consist of a spiritual kingdom; this was the divine purpose; and in conformity with this purpose, we now have seen the first christian churches to have been formed. Those only were baptized who gave evidence of possessing faith in Christ. But the practice of infant baptism is entirely inconsistent with this divine purpose. Faith is the qualification for membership in the church of Christ; but infants cannot believe, infants are not saved by faith; if they die in infancy, they are saved, doubtless, by the death of Christ, but surely not by faith in his death. Nor is there any means of securing that they shall believe; baptized infants notwithstanding all the care of sponsors and parents often grow up without faith, and without holiness, loving "the world," and "the things of the world," rather than religion. Is not this almost universally the case? What then must necessarily be the consequence of admitting infants to baptism? A worldly church; if such a solecism in language may be admitted. Unless conversion to God should become a much more frequent occurrence than it has ever yet been, these worldly members of the church must necessarily soon outnumber the spiritual members, and then, where are we to look for the characteristics of that kingdom, which, as the Saviour so solemnly declares, no man shall enter unless he be born of water and of the spirit? As this subject will however necessarily come to be more particularly considered in our examination of Mr. Elder's arguments for the sameness of the Jewish and christian churches; we shall dismiss it for the present, with the earnest hope and prayer, that all, who shall have perused the evidence now collected from the New Testament, may be brought to see how distinctly it exhibits THE BAPTISM OF PENITENT BELIEVERS AS THE ONLY CHRISTIAN BAPTISM, and how incumbent therefore it is on every one who would "obey God rather than man," seriously to inquire whether he *has* obeyed the command of his Saviour in an ordinance sanctioned by his own example; by the practice of his apostles, and by the whole testimony furnished by that book which is emphatically called the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. ELDER'S INFERENCES FOR INFANT BAPTISM IN LETTER VI.
PARTICULARLY EXAMINED.

To many of our readers, we trust, enough has now been said, to shew, beyond question, the language which the New Testament speaks concerning its own ordinance. Error, however, and the prejudices of early education, are tenacious of their hold on the mind, and a reference to the New Testament for decision of the present question is so reasonable, and the evidence it affords so strong, that pedobaptists, in their struggles to escape from this formidable array of facts, are wont to take refuge in several passages in the New Testament, from which, notwithstanding the vast amount of positive evidence to the contrary, they still think they can *infer* infant baptism. Amongst these we find Mr. Elder, and as a particular reply to his several remarks on this head may be satisfactory to some, we shall proceed to consider the several *inferences* he makes in the order in which they appear in his Letter VI.

It ought however to be expressly understood, that the labour we here undertake, is, on every principle of just reasoning, wholly unnecessary. An *unavoidable* inference in favour of infant baptism is not pretended to be found in the New Testament; the utmost that is claimed is a probability. But that which might have been probable under other circumstances is no longer so under those which attend the present subject. Baptism in every instance is seen to be administered to believers. The *terms* of the Saviour's commission required it to be so administered; the spiritual nature of the Christian church demands the same; what *probability* then can weigh against these *facts*. With these before me what right have I to say—"Probably infants were baptized amongst the households which believed; probably the Saviour in receiving and laying his hands on little children intended to point them out as fit subjects for baptism."

Unnecessary, however, as is the examination of Mr. Elder's inferences; inasmuch as inferences can never weigh against proof, are no longer just inferences, when made in the face of proof; still, some of our readers may wish to see those adduced by Mr. Elder, particularly examined and refuted;

especially as many of them, even in the absence of all positive proof to the contrary, would be found too weak to support even the *slightest* probability in favour of that in proof of which they are advanced.

vi. The first passage from which Mr. Elder attempts to deduce infant baptism is our Lord's commission to his apostles, (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.) "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." In face of the evident bearing of this passage, as fully shewn above, (see page 26) Mr. Elder *infers* from it that our Saviour intended to include infants in the commission from two considerations.

1. *The Commission itself.*—He says (page 28,) "the plain literal meaning of the words, would lead us to conclude that children of every age were included in them. There is no nation under heaven that is not composed of parents and children." Because the word nation then includes every soul in the nation, they are all to be baptized! Then not only the children of believers, but children under any circumstances, with or without the consent of their parents—all persons, indeed, to whom the rite can possibly be administered, without any regard to their feelings or motives, ought to be baptized, for all are equally parts of that which is expressed in the comprehensive term "all nations!" Infants are in fact usually baptized by force; their cries and struggles sufficiently attest this. We are at a loss to see, then, why all persons agreeably to this interpretation of our Lord's commission, should not be baptized, provided only that they are equally with infants placed in the power of the ministers of Christ. All prisoners, then; all idiots and slaves; all who are bound to obey, or influenced by worldly motives to conform, must be baptized, because the command is to baptize *all nations*. Miserable struggling this indeed to support a tottering cause—and how pointedly opposed to all the instances of baptism in the New Testament! We are happy to know that many pedobaptists are as far as we from desiring to accompany Mr. Elder in such an interpretation as the present, and, on the contrary, contend that the children of believers (and as many say of such believers as give proof of possessing vital religion), are the only proper subjects of infant baptism.

2. *Jewish Proselytism.*—Mr. Elder's second inference derived from this passage, he obtains by help of what he terms the Jewish method of proselyting. In Exodus xii, 48, 49, he reminds us, is contained a direction, that "when a stranger should sojourn

with" the children of Israel, and would "keep the passover to the Lord," that "all his males" should be circumcised; and hence he infers, that, in the expression go and "teach all nations baptizing them," the Saviour would mean, and the apostles would understand, infants to be included, because they were familiar with the above scripture and the usage thereupon. We are a little surprised that Mr. E. does not discover somewhat more timidity in treading on this ground, when we remember the point of view in which the Saviour himself has placed the usage of proselyting as then practised; and as no reference is made in our Saviour's words to what the usage *ought* to be, it was the custom as it then stood, which alone was likely to affect the minds of the Apostles in their interpretation of his words. "Woe unto you," says he, "Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two fold more the child of hell than yourselves." (Matt. xxiii. 15.) Branded thus with the execration of the Saviour, was this usage of the Jews likely to receive encouragement from him, or to make a very favourable impression on the mind of his apostles? And what, after all, is this but saying what has been said again and again, in every variety of form, and refuted as often, that, because the Jews circumcised infants, therefore the apostles baptised infants. The children of strangers among the Jews were circumcised, not because the infants were *proselytes*, which would be well nigh as absurd as to call them disciples; but because the covenant of God with the Jewish nation required all its members to be circumcised. What resemblance is discovered in this, to a law which required the founders of the spiritual Israel to "teach" or make disciples and baptize? No other resemblance surely than we have already stated (page 31), namely, that as all the natural descendants of Abraham, together with such strangers as joined them, were entitled to be circumcised; so, all the spiritual descendants, all became the children of Abraham *by faith*, whether Jews or strangers, whether "babes" or "strong men in Christ" are entitled to be baptized.

Besides, *matheteusate*, the word translated "teach" in the commission, does not mean *make proselytes*—but make disciples, or learners.—Mr. Elder might deceive a common reader by leading him to suppose that when the Saviour used the word *matheteusate*, "teach," his hearers would observe the same allusion to proselyting, that the word *proselyte* itself would have. But this is altogether a delusion. In the above quoted passage from Matt. xxiii. 15, the words translated "to make a proselyte" are *poiesai proselyton*. And this is the form of expression which

the Saviour would probably have employed if he intended any allusion to Jewish proselytism. Proselyte was a word which from the customs of the Jews had obtained a fixed signification, and that, as we have seen, not one at all accordant with the spirit of Christianity. (Matt. xxiii. 15.) A disciple on the contrary, means a learner, from the latin, *disco*, to learn. The character of the learner, as we have shewn above, page 12, will depend on the nature of the doctrine he learns : in the present case, that doctrine is christianity ; to learn christianity is to repent of sin and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for forgiveness and salvation. In the mouth of the Saviour, therefore, (*matheteusate*), *teach or make disciples* must mean what we see it actually to have been on the day of Pentecost, that is, *bring men by instruction to repentance and faith in the Gospel*—nothing but this is Christian teaching ; this and this only is to make Christian disciples.

We have already shewn (page 10,) that this is what the apostles necessarily understood from the words in consequence of their own previous occupation in making disciples and baptizing in Judea, amongst whom, Mr. Elder appears to admit, there were no infants ; and which office the Saviour now extends to all nations.

3. *Of such is the kingdom of heaven.*—Mr. Elder's third supposed inference in favour of infant baptism is found in page 30. He conceives, that because our Saviour says concerning little children, "of such is the kingdom of God," "some light" is thrown on the command contained in the commission ; that is, that this circumstance furnishes *inferential* proof of infant baptism.

Mr. Elder does not seem to suppose, as some pedobaptists have done, that, because the children were brought to the Saviour, he of course baptized them. He has felt, we apprehend, the violence this would do to the history, inasmuch as it does not leave us in ignorance of what the Saviour *did*, but proceeds to *tell* us ; namely, that he "took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them and blessed them," (Mark x. 16.) Mr. Elder's argument appears to be two fold ; first, that by the words, *such is the kingdom*, &c. the Saviour meant that his *visible* church was composed of such little children—and if so they ought to be baptized : and secondly, if he meant the church in *heaven* was composed of such little children, then that they must be fit for the visible church and therefore for baptism—let us consider these views in order.

First.—Mr. Elder asks the question "who could have

been meant but those very identical children?" We suppose he must mean little children *like those*, for this appears the proper meaning of the word *such*. We answer, that there is an evident extravagance in such a construction, which men of good common sense will generally perceive at once. What! the kingdom of heaven composed of "those very identical children!" It must be very small then, if *those* compose it! But we will suppose Mr. Elder would amend his expression and say "*like those very identical children*," instead of what he *has* said. Then, the Saviour, according to this, meant to assert, that the kingdom of heaven is *composed of little children*; happy for us all, if we had but died when we were young, for the materials of which the kingdom of heaven is built, it seems, are the young! This would be, however, the force of the words if we gave them such a construction as Mr. Elder contends for; the only modification of the idea, that can be allowed, is, that the Saviour must mean that his kingdom was *chiefly* composed of these. If one were to say, pointing to a pile of lumber, My house is of such as this, we should be strangely surprised to find him who said it living in a house with a freestone front and a tiled roof, and only a wooden back and end! The words if used in the sense Mr. Elder would give them, must, we repeat, mean, that heaven was *principally* composed of such little children as those "in age and size." We look to the apostle John to know how this comports with his description of heaven, and we find him representing its foremost inhabitants as "having been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held," and again, as "they which came out of great tribulation." Infants, doubtless, will be saved by the blood of Christ, for "all glory" is to be his in heaven; but surely he will gather much greater glory from those whom he shall save from the impurity and condemnation of *actual* transgression, and save too in the midst of tribulation and sore trial! These will compose the principal part of the kingdom of Glory. He never could intend to say, then, that infants generally speaking would compose it.

But again, it is to be observed, that he *did not* say this, for the context *requires* a different interpretation. In Mark x. 15, 16, with which concurs Luke xviii. 16, 17, the passage stands thus, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." These words added by our Saviour in verse 16, "Verily I say unto you, &c." are plainly what the critics call *epexegetical* of the form-

er ; that is, they are in apposition with—they relate to the same matter as the former ; they are explanatory of, and help us to interpret the former. Every critic knows that there is no more common or more important “ rule for understanding any writing,” than that which teaches us to compare a text with the context, in order to see whether it may not receive light from it. We ask Mr. Elder to apply this rule to the case before us ; and to say, whether the words, “ verily I say unto you &c.” immediately following the words, “ of such is the kingdom of heaven,” do not necessarily lead us to an interpretation entirely different from that which he has advanced ; whether they do not evidently require us to understand our Saviour to mean that the kingdom of heaven is composed of such little children, only *because* no one can enter that kingdom without receiving it as a little child, with humility, with teachableness, with filial faith and confidence in God the universal Parent. The context in fact compels us to seek some previously known point of resemblance between such children as were brought to the Saviour, and all who are subjects of his kingdom. Humble, teachable persons, putting their dependence in God their father, converted to Christ, and thereby become as “ little children,” are known to be subjects of his kingdom, no others are. What point of resemblance then is seen between such persons and little children?—can we see any, except that which we have already named ; that as little children when contrasted with rude boisterous and wicked men are comparatively humble and teachable and feel their dependance on their parents or guardians, so true converts are humble and teachable, and feel their dependance on their heavenly father ?

It might be added, that whatever evil propensities they inherit, little children have never committed actual sin ; so, true converts, by faith in Christ, become as though they had never sinned, for all their sins are washed away in the “ blood of the Lamb.” What else does Mr. Elder suppose our Saviour to mean by being “ converted,” and becoming “ as little children,” or by that yet bolder figure being “ born again”—becoming as little children again from the very womb, if he does not mean what has now been stated ? And is it not very strange that with these last quoted passages to help Mr. Elder in his interpretation, he yet should affirm that “ it would be subversive of all just rules for understanding any writer to say that our Lord meant not these identical children, but good men who in some respects resemble children,” when he declared that of such is the kingdom of heaven ? Have the just rules, then, of interpretation, changed together with Mr. Elder’s change of

principles. He was not always ignorant of the importance of the context to the interpretation of a text, for in his former treatise against infant baptism we find him writing as follows: page 11. "The whole weight of your argument," he tells Mr. Jackson, "must rest on the words, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Does [the Saviour] mean of such in age and size, or of such in humility and docility of disposition? His subsequent remarks [viz. the context,] determine in favour of the latter meaning." He then proceeds to quote the additional passages in Mark and Luke, and also that in Matt. xviii. 3. It is very remarkable that in more places than the present Mr. Elder does not *rebut* his former opinions, he contents himself with *passing them by*. Is it because he feels them to be unanswerable? *

Secondly.—A sufficient answer to Mr. Elder's second argument on this passage, is in fact contained in what is written above. He mistakes the interpretation of the passage; and in reply to both his arguments founded on it, let it be remembered that his inference if true proves nothing. Even if the Saviour did mean on this occasion to say, that of such little children as those they brought to him, the kingdom of God, whether on earth or in heaven, visible or invisible, was composed; it would by no means follow, that therefore they ought to be baptized; inasmuch as we have no just warrant for using or applying the ordinance of baptism, which is a *New Testament* ordinance, otherwise, or to any other persons, than the New Testament pattern will justify. If there we see it used *only* in the case of voluntary, conscious, intelligent, accountable beings, beings who were taught, repented, and believed, and there is no precept or *unavoidable* inference in proof of any other use, we have no authority to employ it in any other way.

One word more and we have done with this point for the present. The passage itself furnishes an argument directly *against* the practice which Mr. Elder labours to prove from it. It is, in few words, as follows—If the children who were brought

* In all matters of accurate criticism the German scholars confessedly hold the highest rank, and accordingly by a reference to Kuinoel, a pedobaptist, and no mean authority, on the place in Matthew, we find the following comment or paraphrase—"Ye know, that men induced with those dispositions, with which infants are induced, being like them in modesty, will be the citizens of the Messiah's kingdom, see xviii. 3. [the passage to which we have already alluded as explanatory in showing the necessity of becoming "as little children,"] In *τοιούτοις*, [the Greek word translated such,] means those who are like infants, as most evidently [*planissime*] those words of Christ teach, which we read in Mark x. 15. and Luke xviii. 17.

to the Saviour, had not yet been baptized, and it were necessary, and so highly necessary as our pedobaptist brethren contend, surely the Saviour would have directed them to be baptized, and the historian (Mark x. 16.) who is so particular to inform us that Christ took them up in his arms, laid his hands upon them, and blessed them, would hardly have omitted to tell us of that direction. But, again, on the other hand, if they were already baptized and thereby made members of the visible church, and received into the company of christians as fellow christians, it can scarcely be believed that the apostles would have opposed their being brought to Christ—and if in reply to this it be said, as Mr. Elder appears to say in Letter V. that John's baptism, being, as he thinks, "not christian baptism," no infants were baptized until after the resurrection of Christ, we beg Mr. Elder and all pedobaptists to remember how large a concession this is, and to hold to it.

4. Mr. Elder's fourth inference in support of infant baptism is, that "if the words go and teach all nations, do not include children, then the apostles had no charge concerning them at all." This objection surely must provoke a smile from many pedobaptists as well as baptists. It is not charge enough, that they were to teach them as soon as they were capable of being taught? Would Mr. Elder have the apostles charged with the additional business of *nursing* the infants? or, would he require the commission to be so worded as to caution the apostles against teaching them before they were capable of understanding instructions?

5. *For the promise is unto you and to your children*—The next passages of Scripture on which Mr. Elder comments (Letters, page 32), as containing a supposed inference in favour of infant baptism are found in Acts ii. and iii. particularly ii. 38. 39. and iii. 25. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call," "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." These chapters Mr. Elder begs us to "read with much attention and see if we do not agree with him." Because the apostles did not inform the Jews on these occasions that "none but adults were to be the subjects of 'the Lord's' kingdom," Mr. Elder infers that infants must have been baptized. We have,

accordingly, again, as often before, read these chapters with the most careful attention ; and, so far from finding any thing in them, in the *least degree*, to justify so great a departure from the model of baptism as distinctly presented throughout the New Testament, we cannot help perceiving that Mr. Elder has fallen into an entire misconception of the general strain and bearing of the whole transactions recorded in them.

First.—The first of the passages named is the occasion of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, the first preaching of the apostles after the resurrection of the Saviour. The miraculous gift of languages, which marked that occasion, had attracted great crowds of people, among whom, were multitudes of Jews from various parts of the world, who possibly had been drawn to Jerusalem by the great public festival of Pentecost, "the feast of the harvest," on which joyful occasion, in the days of the apostles, Josephus informs us, many Jews, from foreign countries, came to Jerusalem.* To this mixed multitude, thus assembled, Peter preached. As they "were amazed and in doubt" about the miraculous gift of tongues, Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, seized the occasion to press on them their ancient scriptures (Joel ii. 28, 29.) which foretold this very event. He then adverts to the miracles and crucifixion of Christ ; to his resurrection as foretold by David ; to his exaltation by the right hand of God the Father, from whom, he declares, he had "received the promise of the Holy Ghost," foretold by Joel, and had, accordingly, "shed forth that which they then saw and heard ;" and concludes with asserting that "God had made that same Jesus, whom" says he, "ye with wicked hands, have crucified both Lord and Christ." This address was not ineffectual ; Peter's hearers are pricked in their hearts, and cry out in their anguish, "men and brethren what shall we do ?" Peter urges them with this advice, "*Repent, and be baptized every one of you,*" "for the remission of sins and ye shall receive," says he, "the gift of the Holy Ghost," the same foretold by Joel which had just excited their amazement ; and lest they should suppose the promise of Joel was already *wholly* fulfilled in the persons of the apostles and other disciples, Peter presses on them its ample scope ; assuring them that it was not thus confined ; "the promise," says he, "is *unto you*" who hear me ; but more than this, it is unto "your children" also, your offspring, who, on the conditions of repentance and baptism, should likewise obtain spiritual gifts ; "your daughters" in the words of Joel "shall prophesy and your young men see visions."

* Jahn's Archæology, 355.

But yet more ; seeing a vast multitude before him, "out of every nation under heaven," who might in their distress be ready to conclude, that this promise, although not confined to the disciples who had already received the Holy Ghost, might nevertheless be limited to Judea, the apostle completes the glad climax of hope and promise, by assuring them, that it extended its blessings abroad through the earth ; "to all," he cries, "who are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." The man who sees infant baptism here must be indued with a new species of sight ! If it could be supposed that it ever could come into the minds of Peter's hearers, that because their infants were circumcised in compliance with the Mosaic ritual, therefore, they as infants could be among the sons and daughters, who, according to Joel's prediction, should see visions and prophecy ; that they could "repent ;" "speak with tongues ;" and exercise other miraculous gifts ; then, indeed, we may admit, that the parents of those children might possibly expect them to be baptized also ; and so, bring the apostles to the necessity of stating as Mr. Elder supposes, that none but adults were to be the subjects of our Lord's kingdom, but surely not otherwise. As well might we suppose that infants were some of those persons spoken of in the 41 verse, "who gladly received the apostle's word and were baptized," when there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*

Secondly.—Let us now, in like manner, proceed to examine the third chapter of Acts. Peter and John having healed a poor beggar, lame from his youth, as he sat for alms at the gate of the temple called beautiful, a great crowd is collected around the apostles and the healed cripple, in Solomon's porch ; "all the people ran together unto them greatly wondering." Peter as before, seizes the occasion. He renounces any claim to the performance of this act of healing "by their own power or ho-

* That this is the interpretation preferred by learned pedobaptists, will appear from the following extracts :—DR. WHITAY. "These words will not prove a right of infants to receive baptism, the promise here being that only of the Holy Ghost, mentioned verses 16, 17, 18, and so relating only to the times of the miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost, and those persons who by age were capable of these extraordinary gifts."

Annotations on the place.

DR. DONDRIDGE. "The promise is to you and to your children. Considering that the gift of the Spirit had been mentioned just before, it seems most natural to interpret this as a reference to that passage in Joel, which had been so largely recited above, (ver. 17, et seq.) where God promises the effusion of the Spirit on their sons and their daughters."

Fam. Expos. Note on the place.

liness." "The Prince of Life" alone had done it. "The Holy one and the Just," to whom they had preferred "a murderer," whom they had "denied," betrayed, "and killed," but whom God had raised from the dead—"his name, through faith in his name" had restored the poor cripple to "this perfect soundness." The apostle then, mingling tenderness with reproof, admits their ignorance, and that of their rulers, and informs them, that the sufferings of Christ were in fulfilment of ancient prophecy. He exhorts them to repentance and conversion, bringing full to view, and urging as a powerful motive, the blotting out of their sins, recorded, as it were, in God's book at the second coming of Christ, at "the times of refreshing," and of the restitution of all things, "which," he says, "God has foretold by the mouths of all his holy prophets." He then repeats, that Moses, Samuel, and all the prophets had spoken of these days; reminds them, that they were the "children of the prophets," that is, as Jews, peculiarly interested in the promises of God to their fathers, of which he especially quotes that to Abraham, "and in thy seed shall all the kindred of the earth be blessed;" and concludes with the touching assurance, that though the whole earth was equally interested in the promise, yet *first to them*, nevertheless, God had sent his son to bless, in "turning away" says he "every one of you from your iniquities." There is nothing here to induce the idea in the minds of the people that their infants were to be baptized. The prominent thoughts are, repentance; conversion; a blotting out of recorded sins which otherwise would condemn them at the second coming of Christ; a blessing of which the Gentiles, "all the ends of the earth," *who did not use circumcision*, were to be partakers, equally with the Jews; but especially a blessing which was to be *first* fulfilled to them, on repentance, and conversion, by turning away *every one of them* from their iniquities. These are the prominent thoughts, these the things held forth. Are they such as were at all calculated to induce the people to think that their infants were to be baptized; or even that the blessings promised were such as *could* be predicated concerning them? could infants be possibly included in the expression "turning away every one of you from his iniquities?" This is a blessing promised to those who had previously pursued iniquitous courses; to such as had killed the Prince of Life. Whatever sinful propensities infants have, they are never spoken of, in the word of God, as those, who need to be turned away for their iniquities.

6. A sixth inference is, that "we never find the Jews making any objection to the apostles' teaching, as having a

tendency to exclude their children from the privileges of the church of God." There *was* no such objection ; we admit it ; how could there be, when the character of the church, which the apostles were collecting, was that of an assembly of persons who repented, were converted, believed, and rejoiced ? But how unfair is the insinuation that infants *are* excluded by Baptists from the privileges of the church. We admit them to all the privileges which are adapted to their condition. Do infants enjoy no privilege in being the subjects of prayer, in having pious, praying friends ; in receiving constant religious instruction and admonition ?

7. Mr Elder's next inference is " that the believing Jews for a number of years after the resurrection of our Lord, continued to circumcise their children," which as he chooses to assert, but not to prove, " they *undoubtedly* did on the principles of infant church membership." We humbly conceive the idea of infant church membership to be a creation of much later times. We doubt much, whether a Jew could have possibly understood its meaning ; and, in our turn, venture to assert, leaving our readers to judge whether or not we are sustained by proof in doing so, that the believing Jews continued to circumcise their children on the plain and simple principle that Moses commanded circumcision ; and because, not seeing, as yet, that all types and shadows were fulfilled in Christ, they were unwilling to abandon a practice endeared to them by long habit and national prejudices. There is, in fact, far more reason to infer from the continuance of circumcision, that infant baptism was *not* practised than that it was. For, if baptism, as some pedobaptists contend, came in lieu of circumcision — if baptism was, in fact, the *christian* circumcision, the Jews would have been more likely to be satisfied with this sort of ritual fulfilment of their ancient practices, and accordingly to abandon the old ceremony, circumcision, for the new one, baptism.

8. Another inference Mr. Elder derives from 1 Cor. vii. 14. " The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband : else were your children unclean ; *but now are they holy.*" And here we cannot refrain from expressing our surprise at the exceedingly perverse reasoning offered by Mr. Elder upon this passage. In order to bring this clearly to view, it is necessary to glance at the scope of the apostle's argument.

A question had arisen, in the Corinthian church, as to the lawfulness of marriage in general. This appears from the

advice to the married believers to remain together, (10 v.), as well as from the whole tenor of the apostles discourse. This question can hardly have arisen merely from the trouble and persecution, "the present distress," (v. 26) to which Christians were then exposed; some other cause must have contributed to it, very probably, as Mr. Scott supposes, some notion of the grossness of the marriage state, borrowed, possibly, from the Pythagoreans, or some other sect of philosophers. This question was referred to the apostle. His reply he gives in the chapter before us. "Concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me," says he, "it is good" to abstain from marriage on account of "the present distress" (vs. 1. 26.) Nevertheless, while this was his preference, he imposed no rule upon them, but left it to be decided by the tendencies of their own minds. "Every man," he reminds them, "hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that;" and then, he proceeds to establish, firmly, the propriety and lawfulness of marriage, in the following terms; "and unto the married I command, yet not I, BUT THE LORD, did not the wife depart from her husband," (v. 10.) This verse relates evidently to the case of two believers, because it is distinguished from the next case, in vs. 12 and 13, which is that where one of the parties is an unbeliever.

Having thus decided the general question of the propriety or lawfulness of marriage, he advances to the case in vs 12 &c. viz. that of persons "unequally yoked together," believers with unbelievers. If marriage, in any case, were unlawful, as some at Corinth reasoned, how likely was a married person, afterwards converted to christianity, to think, that his or her continued connection with an unbelieving partner was yet more unlawful. This scruple, however, the apostle at once removes. He desires such persons to remain together; the unbelieving wife or husband being, as he says, "sanctified," or "made holy," *as respects the marriage connection*, by the believing partner; and then he adds the words in dispute, "else," says he, "were your children unclean, but now are they [also] holy."

From this review of the passage, it is apparent, that the subject in discussion was, as we have already stated, the lawfulness or propriety of marriage itself. That it was lawful, the apostle establishes by an appeal to the original law of God, (v. 10.) ; the case of the union of believers and unbelievers comes to be considered merely as a part of the main subject; while the allusion to children is introduced in a manner yet more subordinate, as illustrative of his general argument.

But now, since such was the main subject and general

course of thought, it is apparent, that the *sanctification* or *holiness* of the unbelieving partner can have no relation, as Mr. Elder would have us believe, to "*denomination*," to any name which these unbelieving partners were to bear, still less to any church privileges they were to obtain ; for this is a subject not at all adverted to in the whole passage : neither can sanctification or holiness be mentioned by the apostle with *any relation to the condition of the children*, for that is a subject of which he has not yet spoken ; it does not occur until the close of the verse, and when he does mention it, it is plainly as an *illustration* merely of what he had already stated. The thing then which he intends by the words "*the unbelieving wife or husband is sanctified*," must relate to the general subject which was previously treated of, namely, the lawfulness of marriage itself, or, at least, the subordinate subject—the propriety of continuing the connection of believers with unbelievers. The fact of advice being given in this case, is, of itself, sufficient to shew, that the Corinthians had questioned, whether it was *lawful in God's sight* to remain united with their unbelieving partners, the notion of the grossness of marriage borrowed from the Pythagoreans being strengthened in their minds by the christian rule that marriage should be "*only in the Lord* ;" that is, only in accordance with the will of God, and in agreement with the original institution of the marriage connection. *In relation to this rule*, then, it must be, that the apostle declares the unbelieving partner to be *sanctified*. It is a holy and allowable thing, says he, in God's sight, to continue together ; it is not unlawful to remain thus connected.

The nature of that *holiness* or *sanctification*, then, which the apostle thus attributes to the unbelieving partner, being ascertained, it follows, that that of the children must be *the same*. Every Greek scholar knows that the two words "*hagiastai*," is or has been sanctified or made holy, and *hagia*, holy, the one the verb, the other the adjective, are substantially the same in signification.

We cannot avoid, then, arriving at the conclusion, that when holiness is attributed to the children, it must still have a reference to the marriage connection, as did the holiness of the parent. But that of the parent was in the sense of *approved by the law of God* ; that of the children then must be *the same* ; the children are *approved by the law of God as born in relation to that marriage bond which he sanctions* ; in this sense they are holy ; that is, they are not the children of an unclean, forbidden connection ; they are not bastards. Many pedobaptist writers on this passage seem to forget, that there are illegitimate children

in God's sight as well as man's; and that however the heathen laws of Corinth, or any other state, might have sanctioned a connection, that His law forbids; still, in the minds of christians, such connections would have been unlawful and unclean, and their children bastards. When in Deut. xxiii. 2, we read the enactment, "a bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord," it is plain that there was an impression at that time existing of the unfortunate state of bastardy, or it would not have had a distinctive name. That law itself would strongly increase an unfavorable impression; until the tenth generation, they were regarded as unclean, and were forbidden to assemble with the congregation of Israel. Paul's reference to the same thing in the following passage in Heb. xii. 8, "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons," still marks the reigning impression among the Jews respecting the unclean nature of bastardy; the same impression would exist in Corinth and other churches, in all which were many Jews who would introduce much of their own feeling in relation to these matters; all which considerations cast light on the passage before us, as shewing to what sort of feeling the apostle appeals when he says, "else were your children unclean, but now are they holy." He brings it, as a thing known and admitted by those whom he addresses, in order to add strength to his preceding argument. "It had never come into their minds that their children were illegitimate; in the eye of God bastards; begotten in wedlock forbidden by his holy law," and to this circumstance therefore the apostle appeals, "Why this scruple about marriage," says he, "you never, for a moment, thought of your children being unclean, of their being born in a state disapproved of by God, why then, suppose that state itself unlawful.

But now contrast this view of the matter with Mr. Elder's gloss. His words are as follows: "It is as if the apostle had said, where two are united in wedlock, a christian and a heathen, the better part shall give denomination to both. They shall both be considered as christians, as far as the children are concerned, so that the children are relatively holy, as if both parents were christians, and are in consequence entitled to a place in the church of God." There never was a more illogical conclusion. *Relatively* holy, of course, both parent and child are to be considered. But we ask Mr. Elder, and we ask every man who can reason, and will reason fairly, *relatively to what* are they holy? Relatively to a church state, a subject which has not been so much as alluded to? or, relatively to the marriage state, the subject in discussion? Relatively to

the marriage state *must* be the answer in the case of the parent ; relatively then, to the same state ought to be the answer in the case of the children. But such is not Mr. Elder's mode of reasoning ; no, he will have us believe, that the word *hagiastai*, is sanctified or made holy, means, "considered as christians so far as the children are concerned," when, as yet, the children had not been so much as mentioned, and the subject in question plainly was, the lawfulness of marriage and that only. Does Mr. Elder fail to perceive that such an interpretation as his, loses sight completely of the strain of the apostle's argument ? One would think so ; and yet, how can this be, when, a word or two below, he asserts "this perfectly suits the tenor of the apostle's discourse, which was to persuade believers not to separate from their unbelieving partners." This is truly to "make white, black," and "to put bitter for sweet." So, to tell a believing wife that her unbelieving husband was (*hagiastai*,) made holy *as far as their children are concerned*, was an answer to her, whose only inquiry addressed to the apostle was, whether he was (*hagiastai*,) made holy, *as far as she was concerned* ; that is whether the marriage bond was lawful !

We have here, as in a multitude of cases, to complain that Mr. Elder seems entirely to have forgotten that arguments from his mouth cannot come with the grace they might from one who never appeared as a combatant on the side he now opposes. It became him, in vindicating his professed change of belief, not to have been satisfied with merely making such a statement as might suffice one *first* entering the lists of controversy on this subject ; but to remember that he is combating his own published arguments, and to have shewn, therefore, wherein he has been brought to see that those arguments are deficient. This he seldom, if ever, does :—"It has been said," he informs us in his last publication, "that the holiness of children means legitimacy." "But, surely," he exclaims, "there was no law in Corinth, a heathen city, that made it necessary for the parents to be Christians, in order that their children should be legitimate." Had he then forgotten that there was a different view of legitimacy than that which was created merely by *human laws* ; a legitimacy that depended on the law of *God* ? Had he never seen this view in Dr. Chapin's letters from which he quotes ? or had he forgotten, that, in his former treatise on baptism, he had written as follows, "if marriage was unlawful among christians ; or if difference of religion dissolved it, then, your living together would be unlawful and your children would be unclean or illegitimate *in the sight of God*, as being begotten in a state that God had not sanctioned or made lawful ?" (page 13.)

To this his former clear statement of the meaning of the passage in question, Mr. Elder, in his recent letters, has not merely neglected to make a sufficient answer, but he has made no answer at all. Yet he once felt its accuracy and force. How does he now shew the reasoning on which his former interpretation rested, to be incorrect? This he does not condescend to inform us.

But we cannot quit this passage, without noticing one other absurdity in Mr. Elder's statement, which he once saw as plainly as we do, but which nevertheless, he now adopts, without a word to explain its seeming inconsistencies. The believing and unbelieving partners "shall both" as he explains the passage, "be considered as christians, so far as the children are concerned, so that the children are relatively holy as if both parents were christians; and are in consequence entitled to a place in the church of God." In his former treatise (page 14) addressing his opponent Mr. Jackson, he writes thus. "If," says he, "we admit your exposition, that the holiness of the children consists in being dedicated to God, it must follow that the unbelieving parent is dedicated to God also; for to be sanctified and to be made holy is the same thing." Thus he admits, as no one can deny, that the holiness of both parent and child are of the same kind; now, according to his present statement, children in consequence of this relative holiness are entitled to a place in the church of God; then the unbelieving parent must be equally entitled to such a place—a heathen parent without repentance, without faith, entitled to a place in the church of God! entitled therefore to baptism—to the Lord's supper! to every privilege of the church! It is impossible to escape this absurd conclusion, on Mr. Elder's mode of reasoning. He once saw its absurdity; and he owed it, therefore, to the denomination of christians he has deserted, and to the public, to shew in what way he could adopt his present professed views, this absurdity notwithstanding! and yet at the close of his remarks, on this head, we find him, as in several other places, affecting to exult at the consideration, that those who oppose infant baptism "will always find this a hard text to be understood." They will indeed, if the Lord should favor them with no better interpreter than Mr. Elder.

9. We advance now to Mr. Elder's next inference in support of infant baptism. It is that, so often repeated, and as often exploded, derived from *the baptism of households*. Several households are mentioned as having been baptized, and on these some supporters of infant baptism seize, with avidity, as affording, they think, a glimpse of evidence in support of their fa-

vorite system, and among them we find the writer whose views we now combat. Households, they argue, very frequently contain infants, therefore if households were baptized, we may be sure, they inform us, that there were infants among them who were baptized likewise. Is this logical reasoning? If it be admitted that households do frequently contain infants, must it not also be admitted that they likewise very frequently contain no infants? and shall we, therefore, from the same fact, the baptism of households, argue, that infants were *not* baptized? This would be just as good logic as the other. But it is further to be considered, that, when we read of baptizing households; even if we were *sure* there were infants in them, we must first ask ourselves what baptism is, before we can decide that those infants partook of the ordinance. For, if any one invited his friend's whole family or household to a literary coterie, a reading or musical party, who would suppose that he invited the little infants or even the servants to be partakers of the entertainment? But why so? Because we know that a literary, a reading, or a musical party, is an entertainment in which infants cannot join, and to which servants are not ordinarily admitted. When, therefore, in every other case in scripture where baptism is mentioned, it is seen to be an ordinance administered to those who confessed their sins, repented, believed, rejoiced; an ordinance, too, directed by the Saviour to be administered to those who were made disciples, or taught, do we need to be informed, when we come to the case in which a household is baptized, that even if there *were* infants in it, they were not baptized?

In John iv. 53, we read concerning the nobleman of Capernaum, "and himself *believed*, and his whole *house*;" in Acts x. 2. of Cornelius as "one that *feared God* with all his *house*;" in Acts xvi. 32. of the Philippian jailor, that they *spoke to him* and to *all* that were in his *house*; of the same person, (34 v.) that he *rejoiced, believing* in God with *all his house*; in Rom. xvi. 10. are the words, "salute them which are of Aristobulus' household;" in Philippians iv. 22. it is said, "all the saints *salute* you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's *household*;" do we infer from these cases that infants in those several households believed, feared God, were spoken to, rejoiced believing, received and sent salutations to their brethren? But why do we not? plainly, because we know that infants are incapable of such things; and in like manner precisely, because we know them to be incapable of being included in a commission which ran "*teach* all nations baptizing them," incapable of instruction, and of all the various mental and religious affections con-

nected every where throughout the scripture with the ordinance of baptism, we conclude that they were *not* baptized in those cases in which households were baptized.

But it is further worthy of observation, that several, if not all of the very households which are said to be baptized are also said to have possessed such emotions as infants cannot have. Thus of the Jailer's household at Philippi (Acts xvi. 32. 34.) we read, as we have already seen, that Paul and Silas spake "to him and to *all* that were in his house," also that they rejoiced and believed, "he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house;" of the house of Stephanas, (1. Cor. xvi. 15.) that they had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints; and, in all probability, of the family of Lydia also (Acts xvi. 40.) that they were comforted. This goes to shew pretty conclusively that the baptized persons, at the very time of the baptism, consisted not of infants but of persons capable of religious affections. It is indeed quite a remarkable coincidence that these particulars should have been mentioned respecting every one of the baptized households; as if it were the will of God that pedobaptists who will resort to such arguments shall be convicted of their error, almost out of their own mouths; although the error may also be shewn satisfactorily on the other grounds which we have already stated.

Feeling, we suppose, the pressure of this fact, Mr. Elder labours exceedingly to shew, that the proof respecting the religious affections of the households of Lydia and Stephanas is not conclusive. But what if there be no *certain* proof of it?—There is *highly* probable proof; and respecting the house of the Philippian Jailer, proof the most *positive*, of a matter which, however, it is not *necessary* to prove to all. But Mr. Elder takes no manner of notice of the household of the Jailer, who, unequivocally, were spoken to, and rejoiced, and passes on to notice the cases of Lydia and Stephanas, because he thinks the matter in those cases not quite so certain. Thus, he admits, tacitly, the case of the Jailer, which indeed he could only deny in the very teeth of Scripture, and yet he has the boldness to affirm, "It is utterly improbable that there were no infants or young children in those households," (see page 36.) Is it utterly improbable we would ask, that infants were excluded in the mind of the sacred historian when he writes of a household which was *spoken to*, and *rejoiced believing*?

Surely the courage with which some men will argue in the face of evidence and candour, is amazing, but far from enviable! In page 35, the writer whose arguments we controvert, in his remarks on Lydia's household, asks the following ques-

tion, "If they had been adults and were converted, would not the sacred writer have recorded it as well as hers?" And is not the baptism of the adults in her family recorded sufficiently, in the words that mention that of her household? It is at least as express a statement of the baptism of adult members of her house, as it is of infants. Moreover, if adults were not baptized in her household, who are the brethren mentioned in v. 40, whom Paul and Silas met and comforted? After the baptism of Lydia and her household, no mention is made of any other conversion, except that of the Jailer and his family in the prison, "out of" which Paul and Silas went, and when they entered into the house of Lydia, where nevertheless they found brethren whom they comforted. What brethren were these? Not surely those whom they had just left in the Jailer's house. The almost unavoidable inference is that they were members of Lydia's family.

There is but one conjecture that weighs at all against this, which has escaped Mr. Elder; was it because he was afraid to draw into too much notice this troublesome verse 40? The conjecture to which we allude is that the brethren in Lydia's household may have been Luke the historian, and perhaps other travelling companions of Paul and Silas. But we think the language of the passage makes against this conjecture—the words "and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them and departed," are much more suitable to a company whom, when they had comforted, they left behind, than to those who travelled with them.

But supposing the conversion of adults in Lydia's house to be not recorded; supposing scripture to be silent on this subject, Mr. Elder argues from that silence, that there were in fact no adults in Lydia's household. Will he admit the potency of silence as an argument against infant baptism? Mr. Elder himself will allow that there is no *express* case of infant baptism in the whole New Testament. Not when John baptized, nor Jesus, nor his apostles; not on the day of Pentecost, when three thousand received baptism; not when Peter baptized Cornelius and his friends; not at Samaria, when multitudes were baptized both men and women; not even in the case of any one of these households of which we speak; no, not one *express* case of infant baptism in any one of them. Will he now admit the *force* of his own question, and allow us to ask in the same style, "If there had been infants in any of these cases who were baptized, would not the sacred writer have recorded it? Were not their souls as valuable as the souls of adults? Would it not have been as much to the praise

of divine grace to record their baptism as that of the adults who in so many instances are mentioned?" It certainly would; but they are *not* mentioned; therefore, we infer that they were *not* baptized. This ought to be Mr. Elder's conclusion on his own mode of reasoning; and yet he gravely talks of these passages being calculated to mislead, if infant baptism be not true. Who can they mislead but those who choose to argue facts from silence? To such persons, these or any other passages may of course be the foundation for any system which human ingenuity may invent.

On the subject of Lydia and her household we must call on the history to testify to a few further particulars, although Mr. Elder seems to dread so much submitting the case to a rigid cross examination. We hope at least his fears will be controllable so long as the New Testament alone is the witness. To suggest that Lydia might be "a travelling merchant," he thinks would be too much like the conduct of an unprincipled attorney; but what are we to say, if the history, not only suggests, but states as much? Was Lydia a merchant? The New Testament replies, she was "a seller of purple." Was she travelling? The same witness answers she was "of the city of Thyatira," and now in Philippi, some hundred miles at least away from home. It is quite right, too, to suppose that she *had* a husband, though no mention is made of him in the passage, because that would support Mr. Elder's system; but we must not, on any account argue from the silence of the history on this point, that she had *none*, because that would support the contrary system! And although from her language in verse 15, "If ye have judged me faithful—come into my house," we may infer she had no adult servants, yet it would be quite improper to argue from this that she had no adult husband, however similar her language may be to that of one who acknowledged no superior authority in her house! Did Mr. Elder preface his remarks on this case with the caution about unprincipled attorneys because he feared the effect of a rigid examination on the gloss he was about to offer?

Another point which Mr. Elder has entirely overlooked is this. When we are informed that Lydia "was baptized and her household," and of the Jailer that he "was baptized, he and *all* his straightway," it surely is too improbable a thing to suppose that in each of these cases there were but one or two young infants without any other parent, any older children, or any servant to take care of them; but, then, if there must have been in these cases either other parents, or servants, or older

children, or all of these, they, equally with the young infants, were parts of the household ; and is it not quite as right to presume that they were the households, of which the sacred historian speaks as being baptized, as that the young infants were ? How does Mr. Elder get over this difficulty ? And does he imagine that such adult persons in the Jailer's house were baptized merely because they were *his*, without respect to their own faith ? If not, why then think that any infants were so baptized. And if he does think they were baptized on the faith of another, let him plainly avow it. We hope there are few pedobaptists who will follow him in so desperate a conclusion. Many of them struggle a good deal under the burthen of the practice of sponsors promising repentance and faith for infants ; we know not what they would do with such a practice on behalf of adults. We know however, what the scripture says, " So then every one of us shall give account of *himself* to God."

Of the case of Stephanas, we have shewn in page 17, that it is far more probable that those, who, in the same epistle, and that the *first* to their church, (1 Cor. xv. 16,) are spoken of as having been baptized, and also as having addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, were adults, than that they were infants ; and what the history makes probable, in this instance is rendered certain as in other cases also, by the New Testament description of the ordinance, and the nature and constitution of the christian church.*

* DR. WHITBY.—" And when she, [Lydia] and those of her household, were instructed in the christian faith, in the nature of baptism required by it, she was baptized and her household."

Paraphrase on the place.

LIMBORCH. " An undoubted argument, therefore, cannot be drawn from this instance, by which it may be demonstrated, that infants were baptized by the apostles. It might be, that all in her house were of a mature age ; who, as in the exercise of a right understanding, they believed, so they were able to make a public profession of that faith, when they received baptism."

Comment. in loc. Pæd. Ex. V. II p. 359.

ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES. " *Of the city of Thyatira—A city of Asia—here dwelt Lydia, that devout servant of God—And entered into the house of Lydia : doubtless to confirm them in the faith which they had preached to them—Lydia and HERS hearing of their miraculous deliverance, could not but be comforted and confirmed in the truth.*"

Annot. on Acts xvi. 14, 40. Scrip. Guide, p. 25.

DR. DODDRIDGE.—" *Thou shalt be saved, and thine house.* The meaning cannot be, that the eternal salvation of his family could be secured by *his* faith ; but that—if they also themselves believed, they should be entitled to the same spiritual and everlasting blessings

10. *Children addressed.*—We do rejoice most heartily, and congratulate our readers, that we have at length waded through these supposed *inferences* of Mr. Elder, in favour of infant baptism, as far as the last. This is of precisely the same character as the others. Mr. Elder infers that the apostles baptized infants because they address and instruct children in their Epistles to the churches, (Eph. vi. 1, 3,—Col. iii. 20.) And to the obvious answer that these children may have *believed* and been baptized, we have the following very modest and logical assertion, “It is perfectly futile,” Mr. Elder decides, “to say this,” (page 36.) “These epistles were no doubt read in the public assemblies of the churches and of course addressed to all the children of church members without discrimination.”

Let us however *suppose*, for the sake of argument, that *believing* children only were baptized. Would not the language of Paul in the places quoted have been perfectly proper to address to such persons? “Children obey your Parents in the Lord.” If so why is it perfectly futile to suppose that such was the case?

But supposing that some children in their assemblies, as no doubt was the case, had not been baptized, what reason have we

with himself; which Paul might the rather add, as it is probable that many of them, under this terrible alarm, might have attended the master of the family into the dungeon.

Fam. Expos. Note on the place.

MATTHEW HENRY.—“The voice of rejoicing, with that of salvation, was heard in the jailer’s house—He rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house: there was NONE in his house that refused to be baptized, and so made a jar in the ceremony, but they were unanimous in embracing the gospel, which added much to the joy.”

Expos. in loc. Scrip. Guide, p. 26.

CALVIN is still more expressive. “Luke commends the pious zeal of the jailer, because he dedicated his whole house to the Lord, in which also the grace of God illustriously appeared, because it suddenly brought the whole family to a pious consent.”

Comment. in loc. Scrip. Guide, p. 26.

“DR. HAMMOND, though a Pedobaptist himself, thinks the inference of Pedobaptists *unreasonable*, that because Paul mentions the baptism of Stephanas’s household, he must have baptized infants; for without the last verse, which assures us they were not infants, it could not be fairly inferred from the 16th verse. These are his words: “I think it unreasonable that the apostle’s bare mention of baptizing his household, should be thought competent to conclude that infants were baptized by him.”

Works, Vol. I. p. 494. Ped. Exam. Vol. II. p. 358. Scrip. G. p. 28.

☞ All the above are pedobaptist authorities.

to imagine that in such case the apostle would discriminate between believing and unbelieving children of church members? Would it hurt the unbelieving children to hear such exhortations? Can we conceive it probable that he would say, "Ye children *that have been baptized*, obey your Parents?" this would seem to imply that those who were not baptized were released from this obligation. In these epistles moreover, he addresses his admonitions to other classes of persons as well as children—to wives—to husbands—to servants. But in their assemblies there doubtless were oftentimes unbelieving servants, or wives, or husbands, in whose hearing the epistles would be read, and to whom therefore, as well as to believers, they might appear to be addressed "without discrimination." Must we infer from these circumstances that those unbelieving partners or servants were baptized? That such persons did enter their assemblies appears from 1 Cor. xiv 23.

Mr. Elder has professed in times past to be a baptist minister, and has either himself addressed, or has heard other ministers of this denomination, address children, baptized and unbaptized indiscriminately, on the ground of their duties; would a bystander have been justified in inferring from this that all the children in the assembly were baptized? Yet this is what Mr. Elder now infers from the apostle doing the same thing.

CHAPTER VIII.

FALLACY OF MR. ELDER'S ARGUMENT FOR THE SAMENESS OF THE CHURCHES; THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH NOT FOUNDED ON THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT; ITS TRUE FOUNDATION; PARTICULAR ARGUMENTS CONSIDERED.

Driven from every post on the ground of the New Testament on which they thought to establish themselves, the advocates of infant baptism at length take refuge amidst the ceremonies of a darker dispensation, as the forlorn hope of an expiring cause. From the Jewish ordinance of circumcision they think they can derive proof of infant baptism. Here it is that Mr. Elder takes his foremost, and, as he appears to think, his strongest position; and he seems to insinuate while he does so, that baptists are unwilling to follow him thither; (see letters, page 7). This insinuation is entirely groundless; the principle, on which we appeal first to the Scriptures of the New Test-

tament, we have already stated in our first chapter ; to that principle it may be as well to recur in this place by a few additional remarks.

Baptism, as an ordinance of divine appointment, is, as we suppose every one must allow, peculiarly christian ; and whatever resemblances may be traced between Jewish and christian ceremonies, still, nothing is plainer, than that sacrifices are not Christ, ceremonial bathings are not regeneration or the renewing of the Holy Ghost, the passover is not the Lord's supper, and circumcision is not baptism. We have therefore felt it to be our duty and our wisdom first to seek in the pages of the New Testament an answer to the enquiry, what is baptism ? This we have done, and we now ask, is the testimony on this subject as there contained, obscure and scanty ? No, there are many witnesses, and they speak out plainly ; they tell us baptism is the bathing in water of penitent believers, of conscious moral agents.—But do these witnesses never mention infants as being also baptized ? No never.—And do they mention instances of baptism in which the baptized believers must, necessarily or by the highest probability, have had infants, the baptism of whom would surely in some one or other of these cases, have been named if it really took place ? Yes, there are many such cases, as the baptism at the feast of Pentecost, at Samaria, at Corinth, and at Ephesus, and yet no baptism of infants is mentioned in any of these.—And is any thing said by these witnesses concerning the spiritual nature of the church of Christ that makes it apparent that infants would not be baptized ? Yes, the church of Christ is represented as composed of those who are taught of the Lord, and have his law written in their hearts, and baptism is alluded to as significant of an inward purifying work in the heart, and therefore not to be used except when this work actually appears to have taken place.—Here then the question is decided ; to go to other sources of information is a needless labour ; and if any one searching at other sources, should bring back what may appear to be evidence of infant baptism, we are entitled at once to reject it as spurious because contradictory of the New Testament the only proper judge of its own ordinances.

Still, while thus entitled to reject all other, pretended, proof of infant baptism, we repel as unjust and entirely without foundation the insinuation that we are afraid of examining other ground. On the contrary, we avow ourselves perfectly ready to meet Mr. Elder, or any other advocate for infant baptism, on any ground they choose to tread. The Old Testament especially we have examined again and again, perfectly assured, however,

that it can contain no contradiction of the New, and have always returned from the examination with an increased conviction that it furnishes not a shadow of evidence in support of infant baptism. But we proceed now to consider the testimony in its favour, which Mr. Elder informs us he has discovered there.

I. The argument which he labours to maintain in his second and third letters is as follows, namely, that the Jewish and Christian churches, are one and the same; that infants were members of the former and are consequently members of the latter also; and that, therefore, as they were *circumcised* under the Jewish dispensation, they ought to be *baptized* under the christian. This is the whole substance of his statement; and we feel as though our readers must anticipate us, when we say of it, that not only are the premises on which this argument rests untrue, and the conclusion drawn from them such as they by no means sustain; but that, moreover, if the whole argument were true, it can not prove that for which it is adduced, it cannot prove infant baptism. This we now proceed to shew.

1. We ask, what if it should be admitted that there has ever been but one church in the world, and that infants have, always been members of it. Does that prove the duty of baptizing them? We are told in reply, that male infants were formerly *circumcised*. Well, is this a proof that all or any infants must now be *baptized*? Are circumcision and baptism the same ordinance? The excision of the flesh in the bloody rite of circumcision, we apprehend, will appear to most persons very different from bathing the body in water. The only thing that this argument if correct, could possibly prove, is that infants ought still to be circumcised, reduced to its simplest form, it would stand as follows:

Children being members of the Jewish church were circumcised;

But children are members of the Christian church, because it is one and the same as the Jewish; therefore,

Children ought now to be CIRCUMCISED.

"No, no," cries Mr. Elder, "I did not mean to come to that conclusion; for *circumcised* in the last part of the syllogism read *baptized*." Nay, but, Mr. Elder, we cannot read your amendment, for the rules of just reasoning will not allow us. Infants by your argument ought to be circumcised, do you mean to say this? There is no possible escape from this conclusion, but by asserting circumcision and baptism to be the same thing.

Besides, the same argument would prove expressly that female infants ought *not* to be baptized. It would run thus—

The Jewish and Christian churches are one and the same, and infants having been members of the one are therefore members of the other ; but female infants were not admitted to any initiatory rite under the Jewish dispensation ; therefore, they ought not to be admitted to baptism, which is the initiatory rite under the Christian dispensation. Does Mr. Elder admit this conclusion also ?

In like manner may we prove that one's servants and dependants as well as children ought to be baptized, or rather to be circumcised. For the law of circumcision required that all " born in the house," and " bought with money must needs be circumcised ;" and " when a stranger would sojourn" with Israel " and would keep the passover to the Lord," the law commanded " Let all his males be circumcised." Here was no waiting to know whether they had faith or not ; no inquiry whether they gladly received the word, or possessed any religious character, the law was peremptory, it must be obeyed. Thus, then, these slaves, and dependants, and children, older or younger, with or without *spiritual* religion, were admitted as members of the Jewish nation and as such were circumcised. But says Mr. Elder, as the Jewish nation and the Christian church are one and the same thing, therefore slaves and dependants, and children of every age, with or without faith and spiritual religion ought now to be admitted as members of the Christian church, and as such to be (circumcised, or as Mr. Elder will have it) baptized. Did the apostles proceed thus in their ministry ? Do missionaries to the heathen now act thus ? What sort of churches would they now raise in Burmah, India, or Africa, if such were the principle on which they proceeded ? The stronger and the wealthier would soon rule the day. Mammon would be found the most efficient instrument in building up churches of this sort. Gain over to your opinion some Rajah, or other great man with a numerous retinue of dependants ; let him, with the arbitrary rule of an eastern despot, command their baptism, and with the hand laid on the head in token of submission, or the body prostrate on the ground, they will, no doubt, without further inquiry admire the new religion and practice its ordinances. Alas for the poor church of Christ ! this was in fact the principle that eventually governed those that mis-called themselves her friends : they shook hands with the world ; they baptized infants to curry favour with their mothers ; they truckled to power, to wealth, and worldly honor, and still bearing in their front the *name* of the church of Christ, they ended in a mass of corruption and death !

2. We have felt it necessary thus to expose the hollowness of Mr. Elder's argument, based on the sameness of the churches, because it is so constructed as to produce the impression on the mind of a careless reader, or one willingly prejudiced, that all this display of reasoning is making out the thing in question, whereas it leaves that as much in want of proof as ever. Concede the sameness of the churches, and it yet remains to be proved, that baptism, under the new economy, is a rite intended for children; this is the great and important point in dispute, and of this Mr. Elder has as yet offered us no proof at all. He thinks, however, that he supplies it, by the lame assertion, that baptism has come instead of circumcision, while the whole of his proof to sustain this assertion consists of two bold statements, without a single text of scripture to support them. "I only mention," he tells us, (page 21,) "two reasons for believing that baptism has come instead of circumcision."

"1. They are of the same import, they are emblematical of regeneration. They both indicate that we are depraved, and need to be renewed in the spirit of our minds."

"2. They are both initiatory ordinances. The one to Judaism, the other to Christianity. Judaism has been succeeded by Christianity, consequently circumcision has been succeeded by baptism."

And is this enough to establish the point? Who cannot see that these ordinances might both be of the same import, and both be initiatory, and yet not be used in relation to the same sort of persons? This would depend on the laws of the respective systems; and this not being made out, for Mr. Elder makes not a single reference to the New Testament which only can decide whether baptism has come instead of circumcision, our last resort, in search of any thing having the shape of proof in Mr. Elder's letters, is to the *inferences*, that infants were in fact baptized, contained in his sixth letter. That is, indeed, the only one of his letters concerning the subjects of baptism that deserves examination, or has any appearance of reason; and that we have already shewn to be utterly fallacious. We shall however, offer a few words on Mr. Elder's two statements respecting baptism having come instead of circumcision.

First.—As to the *first*, we reply, that the signification of circumcision is, we think, nowhere stated in the Old Testament, and in the New, the very passages, which cast light on its signification, shut out the possibility of baptism, as an ordinance administered to infants, having come in lieu of circumcision.

We cite for instance Colos. ii. 11, "In whom, also, ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ," that is by *christian* circumcision. Now this makes conclusively against Mr. Elder, for it shews that there was a *Christian circumcision* that came in lieu of Jewish circumcision ; but christian circumcision the apostle describes as " putting off the body of the sins of the flesh ;" that is, being regenerated or changed in principles and affections ; and this can only be said of *believers*. It is called *Christian* circumcision as contrasted with Jewish, because *that* was emblematical only, *this* is real, that consisted in an outward sign of what ought to be, this consists in a spiritual principle, which has an *actual* existence. The same thing will appear from Rom. ii. 28, 29. " For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly ; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh : But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly ; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter ; whose praise is not of men, but of God." This clearly shews that infants ought not to be baptized, for it shews that a new ground of church membership is now sought, namely inward instead of outward circumcision, and this, it is impossible for any one to say, whether infants have or not. That the apostle did not think of them as possessing it, is evident, for how can the words " whose praise is not of men, but of God," apply to infants ?

Moreover, it may be observed, that if circumcision was significant of " a putting off the body of the sins of the flesh," it must have been *prospective*, for no proof of regeneration was required of those who were circumcised ; they were circumcised, as they were, old or young, regenerated or unregenerated. But is baptism spoken of any where in the New Testament as an ordinance which, in its emblematical signification, is prospective ? Does it not always mean something that is *done*, not something *to be done* ? Is it not emblematical of regeneration effected in the heart, and not a renewal which we need, which is yet to be ? When Peter says " the like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us," he means, as he afterwards explains, that the outward ordinance only saves us, inasmuch as it is significant of the " answer of a good conscience towards God ;" just in the same way that one might say to a murderer pardoned by the King, pointing to the great seal that confirmed the pardon, That seal has saved you ; but the seal was not significant of any thing yet to come, but of that already granted, namely the pardon. So baptism, in the passage before us, is significant of spiritual cleansing already

obtained, a spiritual cleansing which in the same verse the apostle describes as "the answer of a good conscience towards God ;" baptism then is not prospective of the good conscience but accompanies it as its sign or token. In like manner, when the apostle Paul, in the passage already quoted (Colos. ii. 11,) had described christian circumcision as a putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, that is, as regeneration, in the next verse he proceeds to describe the same thing, by the words, "buried with Christ in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God." Here, by being buried and rising with Christ in baptism, the apostle, putting the sign for the thing signified, intends regeneration, a change of heart and principle, the thing which, it is admitted, baptism signifies ; but can we believe that such language would be used, unless the fact was, that christians, when buried in water, by baptism, and rising from it again, had indeed become dead to the world and sin, and had indeed risen to newness of life ? The apostle plainly alludes to a connection between baptism and regeneration that *actually existed* ; baptism being in fact the sign or symbol of that inward grace which was already received. Baptism therefore was not prospective of that inward grace.

But again if baptism were admitted to come in lieu of circumcision, still let it never be forgotten, that it is to the New Testament we must look, in order to decide how far, and in what respects, it has thus succeeded the ancient rite. But in addition to what has just been stated of its signification, we have already seen the fact to be, that baptism, in the multitude of cases in which it is named in the New Testament, is only administered to professed believers ; we should therefore be compelled to conclude, that if in any sense it came in lieu of circumcision, it is only as respects professed *believers* that it thus came.

Secondly.—Mr. Elder's second proof that baptism came instead of circumcision is, that they are both initiatory ordinances. The one to Judaism, the other to Christianity, Judaism has been succeeded," he says "by Christianity, consequently circumcision has been succeeded by baptism."

This surely is strange logic ! If by Judaism being succeeded by Christianity, Mr. Elder means, merely, that it has been *followed* by it, we suppose every one must see that this can prove no necessary connection between their respective rites. So, Judaism has in many places been followed by Mahometanism, but who would think, therefore, of tracing a connec-

tion between the respective rites of Moses and Mahomet ? But we will suppose Mr. Elder to mean by what he says, that Judaism is Christianity, not merely " has been succeeded by it " That is Judaism and Christianity are one and the same thing. But this brings him into the same dilemma as before, his argument then stands thus:

Circumcision was the initiatory ordinance of Judaism ;
But, Judaism is Christianity; therefore,
Circumcision is the initiatory ordinance of Christianity.

Here, as before, we suppose Mr. Elder would clamour loudly to induce us to read baptism instead of circumcision in the conclusion of the above syllogism, but can we do so and reason honestly? In short, Mr Elder, for ought we can see, has nothing left for it, but roundly to assert that circumcision and baptism are absolutely one and the same thing. They may look different to the eye, but this is all a delusion, they really are not different but alike. And truly we are at a loss to see what greater absurdity there would be in such an assertion, than there is in asserting, and attempting to prove, as Mr. Elder does in the letters before us, that Judaism and Christianity are one and the same thing—The Jewish church the same as the Christian church !

The truth is, indeed, that circumcision and baptism are both of them *initiatory* ordinances, that is, ordinances to be performed by members of the respective churches, at the beginning of their relation as members, but then we must look still to the New Testament to see how far, and in what respects, baptism is an initiatory ordinance. We see it there used as an ordinance administered only to believers at the beginning of their christian profession, as significant of that spiritual cleansing, that dying and being buried to the world which by faith they obtain ; we gather no evidence of baptism being an initiatory ordinance in any other sense than this. It is the initiatory ordinance of believers not of infants. So that, as before stated, if we were to admit that infants are members of the christian church, it by no means follows that baptism, as an initiatory ordinance, is to be administered to them.

In short, it is surprising that any one can be so dull as not to perceive, that proving the Jewish and Christian churches to be the same, does not prove that the same ceremonies are to be used in both. If it does, we shall unavoidably have the whole Jewish ritual back upon us. The fact is, that by divine appointment it was a ceremony or rite of the Jewish church to circumcise male children as well as other males. There was

no doubt or obscurity about the duty. It was distinctly and expressly enjoined, as we learn from the pages of the Old Testament, the proper place to look for it. So also, on looking into the New Testament, the proper place to find a particular account of the Christian church and its ordinances, we see, with equal distinctness, that, by divine appointment, it is a ceremony or rite of this church to baptize believers, on a credible profession of their faith in Christ; and this is the whole of the matter; no more can possibly be made of it than this, though we should reason about it till doomsday; the circumcision of male infants can never be tortured into the same thing as the baptism of professed believers.

II. We see, then, that all Mr. Elder's shew of argument about the sameness of the Jewish and Christian churches amounts to nothing; for, even if admitted to the fullest extent, it never can prove infant baptism. But then, we by no means allow that the Jewish and Christian churches are one and the same, and will therefore now shew that the whole argument is radically defective in itself as well as in its conclusions.

1. Its fallacy consists in this, that it confounds together, as one and the same thing, *true religion*, and the *dispensation*, the *economy*, or if you choose to call it so, the *church*, in or under which it has pleased God, at different periods, to *preserve* or *foster* true religion. These are things by no means necessarily the same. True religion, indeed, has always been the same, it consists of love to God, testified by faith in his word; by repentance; by obedience to his will; and accordingly good people have always been the same sort of people, that is penitent believers. But then, the dispensation or economy, which God has appointed to foster true religion, and prepare the way for his designs of mercy, has by no means been the same but very various. For a considerable time after the creation, God seems to have left the world without any organized system or dispensation, without any institution at all answerable to our idea of a church, unless the domestic system may be regarded as something of the sort; and so things seem to have continued, until Abraham and his family were chosen as the stock out of which in accordance with the covenants of Jehovah, were to spring the Jewish nation, and the promised Redeemer. In confirmation of these promises, circumcision was an appointed token or seal, and in process of time, this family congregation, naturally, and in conformity with the promise, became enlarged into a nation, and then, under Moses, was, in a more especial manner, organized by the laws and ritual ap-

pointed by him. This, now, was the Mosaic or Jewish dispensation, consisting of a *nation* peculiarly called and blessed of God, among whom true religion, doubtless, was greatly fostered, but which still must not be confounded with true religion itself.

This dispensation moreover was not to last, but to be succeeded by a new and more glorious dispensation, a spiritual nation, of which the Jewish nation was *typical*, and to the rise of which, it contributed, by preserving the knowledge and worship of the true God, as well as furnishing the stock from which the Redeemer was to arise.

The new dispensation was predicted by Jeremiah xxxi. 31, &c. (before referred to, see page 29,) as founded on a covenant or promise on the part of God, to raise up a spiritual Israel by writing the law in their hearts. The manner in which this was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost and afterwards, we have already seen. A congregation or church was collected together of those who gladly received the word; the kingdom of God was preached, and every sincere disciple pressed into it; of this spiritual church or nation, the baptism of believers and the supper of the Lord are the only two rites discoverable in the New Testament. This is the new state of things; the new dispensation under which we now live, and the blessed effect of which is seen whenever a soul is truly converted to God.

That the statement here made is accordant with known facts all our readers, we should think, must admit; but now, can any one fail to see how great a mistake it is to call these *several* dispensations, or churches if you will, one and the same, because religion—the love, and inward spiritual worship of God in the heart, which they were intended to foster—is necessarily always the same; and then to suppose that because a certain ceremony was observed in one, therefore, it must be observed in the other? Parental discipline with the rod was a part of the family economy, but it was not necessarily transferred to the Jewish dispensation, so as to give the priest a right to discipline all children; circumcision of male children was a part of the Jewish system, but this is not necessarily transferred to the Christian church; all born in Israel were necessarily members of the nation and entitled to its privileges, because that dispensation consisted in a nation chosen and separated from all other nations, for the worship of the true God, but it by no means follows that infant children, or any persons without faith, are therefore to be regarded as members of the *spiritual* nation, the Christian church. They in fact cannot be

so, because the only thing that can determine now who is a member of spiritual Israel, is the possession of faith in Christ.

2. The confusion of thought which Mr. Elder discovers in the whole structure of his argument, may probably have been occasioned by a want of discrimination as to the meaning of the word *church*. This word is sometimes used in Scripture to signify. 1. The *whole company* of the redeemed whether on earth or in Heaven, as in the following passage, "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it;—That he might present it unto himself a glorious church," (Eph. v. 25, 27.) This is what is sometimes called, the *invisible church*; because in this sense, the members of it are not regarded as visibly assembled, or organized in one congregation for the worship of God. Even when used in this sense, however, the expression, generally, in some degree takes its shape from the peculiarities of the Christian church. But 2. It more frequently signifies a *particular company* of believers, in a certain family, or town. Cor. xvi. 19, is an instance of the former, "Aquila and Priscilla salute you—with the church that is in their house." 2 Thes. i. 1, is a specimen of the latter, "Paul—unto the church of the Thessalonians," that is the church in the city of Thessalonica. This is what is meant by the *visible church*, because it is *seen* assembled or organized for worship, and with this agrees the nineteenth article of Religion in the Book of Common Prayer; "The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." 3. Another use of the word church seems to designate *all* such churches as last mentioned, *collectively*, as in this instance, 1 Cor. xii. 28, "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, &c." 4. And lastly the word is used in its original and proper signification, which is an *assembly* or *congregation*. Common readers of the Bible are not aware that the same word *ecclesia* which is translated church in all the cases named, is used to designate any public assembly; it is employed for instance to describe that at Ephesus in which the riot occurred, that the town clerk so adroitly quelled. And in this latter sense of a *congregation*, whether of believers or unbelievers, or both, we find the word church or assembly (*ecclesia*), used in Acts vii. 38, in reference to the congregation of the Jewish people or nation; "This is he who was with the church [that is the congregation,] in the wilderness,—and with our fathers: who

received the lively oracles to give unto us." In the same sense the word *ecclesia* is continually used in the Septuagint. From this examination, it may be questioned whether it is strictly proper to speak of the Jewish nation as a church, inasmuch as the word has now acquired a special modification from the peculiar character of the Christian dispensation ; at any rate, when the word is thus used, the mind ought always to discriminate between this application of it to a whole nation, composed of good and bad, believers and unbelievers, and that use which confines it to "a congregation of faithful men."

It may also be observed that the expressions, the kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom of God, borrowed from Daniel vii. 9 to 28, evidently referred to an entire new state of things under the Messiah's government ; when employed to represent his kingdom on earth, they bear a nearer analogy to the *third* sense of the word church, stated above, than to any other ; the church being the whole company of christian disciples, and the kingdom of heaven meaning the blessings which through Christ they enjoy ; both which expressions shew that the Christian church was not one and the same with the Jewish.

Now, if Mr. Elder had thus clearly discriminated as to the use of these words in the New Testament, he hardly, one would think, could have fallen into his present error. He seems to have seized hold of the first meaning of the word church, named above, and, confining his mind to that, has thence laboured to prove, what no man can doubt, what is in fact a mere truism, namely, that the *whole company of the redeemed* are one, whether on earth or in heaven, whether they lived before the flood or after it, whether they worshipped God under the Jewish, or under the Christian dispensation. Of course every one will admit these to be but one, in respect of this, that they are all saved by one and the same Saviour ; and will all sing praises before "the throne of God and of the Lamb," which is in fact no more than to say as before, that religion has always been one and the same thing. But in what *other sense* can we venture to affirm that they are one ? Surely they are *not* one in respect of the *dispensations* under which they have lived. To affirm this is to affirm what is a palpable contradiction in terms ; namely, that the several dispensations with which God has favoured the world, are not different but the same, that circumcision and baptism for instance are the same thing. It is however no less than this palpable contradiction which lies at the root of Mr. Elder's whole argument. In the sense of the word church of which we now speak, infants who die in infancy are of course included, for they must form

a part of the general company of the redeemed, and that company is one as respects the Messiah who saves them; but, then, as that company is not one as respects the ordinances they are to use, it by no means follows that infants are subject under one economy to ordinances used under another, or to any analogous to them; these have always rested on divine command; they have depended on the dispensation or economy appointed at different times, and are to be decided only by a reference to the laws of the respective dispensations. In fact, nothing can be plainer than that, in the whole of his arguments about the sameness of the churches, Mr. Elder entirely loses sight of the question in dispute, which was, not whether the Jewish and Christian churches are one and the same as respects every real point of resemblance, but whether the same ceremonies are to be used in both; whether it is an appointed ceremony in the Christian church to administer the same rite to children as to adults, because it was so in the Jewish nation. The only possible way of proving this, would be to shew, not that the churches are the same, but that their ceremonies *thus far* are the same; and changed as their ceremonies confessedly are in every other point of view, how can this possibly be done, except by the most distinct evidence of it from the New Testament—evidence strong and conclusive in proportion as the alteration made is perspicuous and fundamental. It is unnecessary to shew that no other meaning of the word church can possibly prove the Jewish and Christian churches to be the same. The company of the redeemed at Rome or at Ephesus who practised the ordinances of the Christian dispensation, cannot be the company of the redeemed who at the time of Moses or Isaiah practised the ordinances of the Jewish dispensation.

III. Mr. Elder's argument, it will be remembered, consisted of three distinct propositions, namely :

1. That the Jewish and Christian churches were one and the same.
2. That infants being members of the one, are members of the other also; and therefore,
3. That as they were circumcised in the one church, they ought to be baptized in the other.

We have now shewn in reply—1. That even if the churches were the same, this does not prove infant baptism, because it still remains to be proved from the New Testament that baptism came instead of circumcision, from which source Mr. Elder has adduced no proof, and where in fact, none is to be found, baptism, on the contrary being there represented as

an initiatory rite of *believers* and not *infants*, and *christian* circumcision being that of the heart and not consisting in any ordinance.

2. That Mr. Elder's argument for the sameness of the churches is fundamentally bad, because the only thing alike in the two is the religion of the heart, which never varies, and the only use of the word church, applicable to the two, is that which means the whole company of the redeemed, consequently that they are not alike in their ceremonies, and that the circumcision of infants, therefore, under the Jewish dispensation, affords no argument for the baptism of infants under the Christian.

We shall now, in the *third* place, shew from scripture, that the Jewish and Christian churches cannot be the same, because the Jewish church by its constitution, consisted of a nation which were the children of Abraham, *really*, that is *by descent*, while the Christian church consists of a nation who are the children of Abraham *spiritually*, that is *by faith*, because they possess like faith in God. And herein Mr Elder's erroneous view of the Abrahamic covenant will come to be considered.

To make this matter intelligible, we first inquire from the Old Testament what that is which is commonly called the Abrahamic covenant. On a careful examination of the history, the following will be found to be a correct statement. God, in the first place, called Abraham from his native country to make him the progenitor of a nation, of which intention he gave him repeated assurances on several distinct occasions: this covenant was afterwards further developed under Moses; it belonged peculiarly to the Jews as a nation, and was the foundation on which that dispensation rested. On several of the occasions, however, when God appeared to Abraham, he also intimated that the whole world should derive a blessing from this promise of making Abraham "a great nation," which we now perceive to mean, that the truth would be preserved in the Jewish nation, the descendants of Abraham, and the Messiah be born among them: this is the dawning of the promise of a Saviour first made in Genesis iii. 15, afterwards more fully developed in many of the prophecies, all which together constitute the foundation of the hopes of all the redeemed whether Jewish or Christian, but which has no relation to any *outward* dispensation. Here then, are two *distinct* promises respecting two *distinct* subjects, the one relating to the Jews as a nation, which is confirmed by the seal of circumcision: the other relating to

all redeemed souls of every age without regard to any church constitution, to which the seal of circumcision is not annexed. With respect to the first of these promises however, that relating to the Jews, it is to be added, that we now see from the further information which the New Testament gives, that the Jewish nation, as the natural descendants of Abraham, were a *type* or shadow of the Christian Church—the *spiritual* children of Abraham, because, as such they are spoken of throughout the New Testament ; and also, that the fulfilment of that type was the subject of other promises of God connected with the promise that the Messiah should come, of which the most conspicuous and remarkable is contained in Jeremiah xxxi. 31 to 34, already referred to in pages 29 & 64, and which is quoted *verbatim* in Hebrews viii. 6 to 13, which promises are the true foundation on which the Christian Church rests, as contrasted with that on which the Jewish dispensation rested.

With this general explanation, we proceed to adduce several passages in which the two distinct subjects of God's promises to Abraham will appear in their separate character, they are as follows :

Genesis xii. 2. “ And I will make of thee a great nation, “ and I will bless thee, and make thy name great ; and thou “ shalt be a blessing ; 3 — and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”

This was the *first* call to Abraham, and here the two promises are distinctly marked, the one relating to the Jews, *I will make thee a great nation*, the other to the Messiah, *thou shalt be a blessing, In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed*. The next case in its literal construction, relates solely to the Jews as a nation.

Genesis xv. 5. “ And he brought him forth abroad, and “ said, look now towards heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be “ able to number them: and he said unto him, so shall thy seed “ be.” 6 v. “ And he believed in the LORD ; and he counted “ it to him for righteousness.”

To this promise is added that of the land of Canaan “ to inherit it,” which was confirmed by “ the sign of a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between,” the pieces of the sacrifice which Abraham was commanded to offer on the occasion. Then appears a renewal of the promise of a numerous posterity, and of the land of Canaan, that is to say, the promise which belonged *literally* to the Jews exclusively, and to the Christian church only inasmuch as believers, the spiritual seed of Abraham, are *typified* by the Jewish nation ; it is

found in Gen. xvii. 4. "As for me, behold my covenant is
 "with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. —
 "6 v. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make
 "nations of thee, and Kings shall come out of thee. 7 v. And
 "I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy
 "seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting cove-
 "nant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee.—
 "8 v. And I will give unto thee and thy seed after thee, the
 "land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for
 "an everlasting possession ; and I will be their God."

The passage goes on to command circumcision, "Every
 man child among you sha' be circumcised." It ordains the
 ordinance as a seal of the promise now made, "It shall be a
 token of the covenant betwixt me and you ;" it proceeds to
 give particular directions of the time and manner of it ; and
 concludes with declaring the covenant broken on the part of
 every one not circumcised, "that soul shall be cut off from
 his people ; he hath broken my covenant." In this passage,
 then, it will be observed, 1. That the whole promise respects
 the Jews as a nation. The words respecting the Messiah quoted
 above from Gen. xii. 2, 3, "And thou shalt be a blessing
 — and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," and
 which are repeated in Gen. xxii. 18, are here *wholly omitted*.
 2. That the covenant of circumcision is given, therefore, as a
 confirmation of national blessings to the Jews, as the literal
 descendants of Abraham, and not as a confirmation of the pro-
 mise of the Messiah. 3. That the promise, "I will be their
 God and they shall be my people," evidently, as their subse-
 quent history shews, respected the distinction they obtained as
 a nation, of which, spiritual advantages were only an occasi-
 onal result inasmuch as being thus distinguished, the truth was
 preserved among them, and many would doubtless believe and
 be saved. 4. That the expressions, "an everlasting cove-
 nant," and "an everlasting possession," in vs. 7 and 8, must
 plainly be interpreted in like manner with the expression in v.
 13, "And my covenant [that is circumcision] shall be in your
 flesh for an everlasting covenant;" in the same manner with the
 common expression "the everlasting hills ;" and that in Ex-
 odus xl. 15, where of Aaron and his family, it is said, "their
 anointing sha' be an everlasting priesthood throughout their
 generations, and in many other instances ; that is, when the
 word is used as an epithet with some subject *known to be limited*,
 its own meaning must be limited by that subject : Priests
 anointed to their office should continue as long as the Jewish
 dispensation lasted ; the mountains remain firmly rooted as

long as the world lasts ; Circumcision should be a mark in the flesh, appointed of God to last until the actual circumcision should be succeeded by the spiritual ; and so, Canaan should be a possession of the Jewish nation, and the covenant that secured it to them should continue, until all these figures should be absorbed in that which they typified, namely the future spiritual nation whose circumcision should be that of the heart, and whose portion is God. This is the only reasonable interpretation of this passage, and it is that to which we are plainly directed by the language of the New Testament, especially the following instances, Rom. ii. 28, 29, " For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly ; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh : But he is a Jew who is one inwardly and circumcision is that of the heart, and not in the letter ; whose praise is not of men but of God." So, also Gal. iii. 7, " Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham ;" which passages, and many more that might be collected to the same effect, shew, that the literal promise to Abraham which constituted the Jewish dispensation, having been literally fulfilled, it *now* receives a spiritual fulfilment, which is the basis of the Christian church.

From what is here shewn, it appears, then, that the Abrahamic covenant, so far from proving the Jewish and Christian churches to be one and the same, on the contrary shews them to be necessarily and entirely distinct in all points that can possibly respect the subject in question—the church membership of infants ; for it is clear, that the promise which belonged peculiarly to Israel, and which was confirmed by circumcision, can have no possible reference to the Christian church, except as a type ; but when we ask, to whom did the type relate ; who are the persons that the Jewish church typified ? we go to the New Testament for the answer, and there we learn, that they are those who possess *like faith with faithful Abraham* ; these then are *not infants* ! Infants were members of the Jewish nation by birth or descent, not circumcision, for only males were circumcised. The sort of infants who are members of the Christian church are believers who possess humble teachable dispositions like young children. As to the membership of infants in the *invisible* church, the matter remains as it always was—God only, can tell who they are ; which of them will die and go to heaven ; which of them will live to disbelieve and be lost.

But, further, the Christian church is not based merely on a *fulfilment* of that of which the Jewish nation was a type. As the Mosaic ritual was a development or opening up of the

compact with Abraham ; so the spiritual thing then typified was afterwards opened up in the most distinct language in the form of a covenant, or promise, by a prophecy clearly interpreted in the New Testament, and it is this promise on which the Christian church rests as its glorious foundation. The prophecy is contained in Jeremiah xxxi. 31 to 34, as well as in many other passages. As it is also contained almost word for word in the New Testament, we prefer to cite the passage as it stands in Hebrews viii. The apostle is guarding his Hebrew brethren from apostasy, to do which he had held up to their view the vast superiority of Christ, the High Priest of his people, over the Jewish priests, which he now further shews by contrasting the *new* covenant of which Christ is minister and mediator, and on which the Christian church rests, with the *old* covenants on which the Jewish dispensation was established; his language is as follows :

Hebrew viii. 6. " But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, [than the Jewish Priests,] by how much
 " also he is the mediator of A BETTER COVENANT, which was
 " established upon BETTER PROMISES. 7. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been
 " sought for the second. 8. For finding fault with them, he saith, [and then comes the passage from Jeremiah,] Behold,
 " the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new
 " covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah : 9. Not according to the covenant that I made with
 " their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to
 " lead them out of the land of Egypt ; because they continued
 " not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the
 " Lord. 10. For this is the covenant that I will make with
 " the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I WILL
 " PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MIND, AND WRITE THEM IN THEIR
 " HEARTS : and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to
 " me a people : 11. And they shall not teach every man his
 " neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the
 " Lord : FOR ALL SHALL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE
 " GREATEST. 12. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no
 " more, [then continues the apostle.] 13. In that he saith,
 " A NEW COVENANT he hath made the first OLD. Now that which
 " DECAYETH AND WAXETH OLD is ready to vanish away."

Now, nothing can possibly be plainer than this language, it shews, beyond all question, that there was a radical difference between the covenants on which the Jewish and Christian churches rested, and also in what that difference consists, the

former was a promise of a nation which should be blessed as *such*, the latter is a promise of a body of *believers*, a *new* Israel who should be blessed by having the law written in their hearts. It is true the covenant to which the apostle directly alludes is that made at Sinai, but *that*, as we have before said, consisted in a further developement, an opening up of that made with Abraham respecting his literal descendants ; they were to be numerous, were to possess the land of Canaan, God was to be their God, and they his people ; accordingly the command concerning circumcision is again enforced under Moses, as well as the moral law embodied, and many other precepts added, such as God was of course entitled to give to Israel as their God. The covenant at Sinai then, which is now done away, or rather fulfilled, in the blessings of the Christian dispensation, was in every essential respect the same as that made with Abraham in Genesis xvii.

But, let it be granted, that there remains a connection between the Abrahamic covenant and the Christian church, the only point of connection that is, or can be, contended for, is as we have already repeatedly shewn, that the Jewish nation was to be a *type*, not a pattern, of the Christian church ; this admitted, the question is yet to be answered, Who are the members of the Christian church ? To this question the passage in Hebrews contains a most distinct and conclusive reply—they are those in whom is fulfilled the promise of the new covenant, who *have the law written in their hearts* ; who are made “ new creatures ” by faith in Christ. Is not this the glory of the Christian church ? Is it not plainly this which is the ground of the exulting language of the apostle in Heb. viii. ? And if, then, *believers only* are members of this newly constituted church, *believers only* ought to be baptized.

A few additional remarks by way of explaining or summing up what has been said, shall close this branch of our present inquiry.

1. When we thus contrast the new with the old covenant, let it be remembered, however, that we do not say, that they are not both covenants of grace. It no where appears in his letters that Mr. Elder has a distinct idea of the proper meaning of this expression. A covenant of grace is neither more nor less than a gracious covenant ; a covenant or promise of God, which, in the exercise of his grace, that is of his free good will, he is pleased to make, irrespective of any lawful claim on man's part. In this respect the covenant of God with Abraham, was indeed a covenant of grace, as well as that on

which the Christian church rests. But this is not the ordinary use of the expression. It is usually applied only to the covenant, or promise on which the church of Christ is founded, because the *grace* of that covenant is so superlatively *greater* and *more excellent* than that of the Abrahamic or Mosaic covenant. In this sense of the expression, a covenant of grace, the direct testimony of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as we have now seen proves, conclusively, that the old and new covenants are not one and the same, they are not both *the* covenant of grace.

2. To avoid confusion let our readers not forget what has been already explained, that Jehovah made *two* distinct covenants with Abraham, *the one* literally respected Messiah and his kingdom, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This however was not confirmed by the seal, circumcision, but by a higher security the oath of Jehovah, as is expressly said in Heb. vi. 13, 14. *The other* promise literally respected the temporal blessings to be enjoyed by the Jews, and such spiritual blessings only as those temporal advantages should bring to those among them, who should believe with the heart; this was confirmed by an outward token or seal, namely, circumcision, while the things promised, in that is to say, the numerous progeny of Abraham, and their possession of the distinguished favors of God as a nation, were, as time eventually developed, types, but not patterns, of the spiritual Israel, the Christian church, and her heavenly privileges.

3. If any one should ask why, as the promise respecting Israel, the type of the Christian church, was confirmed by circumcision as a seal, some ordinance corresponding to this should not be observed now, the following plain answers may be given, in accordance with the preceding scriptures. *First*, That it ought not to be observed now, because it is not commanded in the New Testament. *Secondly*, it ought not to be observed, because circumcision was a seal of the covenant with Abraham, and a seal is no longer of any use so soon as the promise which it confirmed is fulfilled. But the spiritual thing typified by Israel is now fulfilled by its accomplishment in the Christian dispensation, and all types and shadows are vanished. *Thirdly*, that so far as circumcision was a symbol of spiritual things, this is fulfilled by the Christian circumcision, that is to say regeneration, "the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh." *Fourthly*, The new covenant requires no outward token as a seal of God's faithfulness, *that* believers will not doubt, and *they* only are interested in the new covenant; besides they possess an inward confirmation that it is

fulfilled in them, far stronger than any outward seal, namely that of the "Holy Ghost," by whom "they are sealed unto the day of Redemption," the Holy Ghost having created within them a hearty love of God and of his law. *Fifthly*, To use baptism, or any other ordinance to infants, to any but believers, in lieu of circumcision, is not only *not commanded*, and therefore wrong, but it is *inconsistent with the spiritual nature* of the new covenant, that, consisting, as we have seen, of the promise "I will put my laws into their minds, and write it in their hearts," and "all shall know me from the least to the greatest."

4. The description in Heb. viii. of the persons who under the new covenant were to be the people of God, comports exactly with those who every where in the New Testament are represented as having formed the first churches ; but as human agents, nevertheless, are necessarily employed in the formation of churches, of course the reception of proper subjects for baptism must depend on their judgment directed by the scriptures ; hence the proper requisite for baptism must be said to be a credible profession of faith in Christ ; the circumstances attending that profession, or the known previous change of character, are the proofs which must determine whether such profession may be believed or not. More on this subject will appear in the sequel.

The sum of the whole matter is as follows ; that the Jewish and Christian churches are not the same, but other and different, although it is true that some were saved in the Jewish church in the same manner as they are now, that is by faith ; that the only reason why infants, as such, were members of the Jewish church was, that, that church by its constitution consisted of a whole nation, but that they are not therefore members of the Christian church as respects any of its rites ; that this circumstance, however, deprives them of no spiritual privileges, on the contrary the superior motives of the Christian religion must lead to increased diligence and prayer for their instruction and salvation, on which subject more will be said hereafter ; and lastly, that to baptize infants is to confound together the spiritual nature of the Christian church with the temporal character of the Jewish, and to prostitute an ordinance of Christ to a use not commanded or even alluded to in the New Testament, to a use therefore which is forbidden and must be displeasing in the sight of God. Happy the day for the Christian church when she shall be no longer influenced by Judaizing doctrine, but taking the New Testament as her

guide shall adhere to the pure and spiritual model which is there set forth.*

* That Mr. Elder's notion of the sameness of the Jewish and Christian churches, in the sense for which he contends, is not agreeable to the sentiments of Pedobaptist writers of good authority, will appear from the following extracts :—

REV. RICHARD WATSON, the late talented Secretary of the Wesleyan Conference.—Universal Redemption, page 35. "As the entrance into the Jewish church was by natural birth, and the entrance into the Christian church, properly so called, is by faith and a spiritual birth, these terms, although many became Christians by mere profession, and enjoyed various privileges in consequence of their people or nation being chosen to receive the gospel, have generally respect, in the New Testament, to bodies of true believers, as such. They are not therefore, to be interpreted, according to the scheme of Dr. Taylor of Norwich, by the constitution of the Jewish, but by the constitution of the Christian church." Again, "it is to be remembered, that a great religious revolution, so to speak, had occurred in the age of the Apostles; with the full import of which we cannot, without calling in the aid of a little reflection, be adequately impressed. This was no other than the *abrogation* of the CHURCH-STATE of the Jews, which had continued for so many ages." And again page 36. "There was then a *NEW ELECTION* of a *NEW PEOPLE* of God, to be composed of Jews, not by virtue of their NATURAL DESCENT, but through their faith in Christ, and of Gentiles of all nations, also believing, and put, as believers, on an equal ground with the believing Jews."

REV. T. H. HORNE, Introduction iii. page 253. "This relative or imputed holiness of the Jews as a covenant people, separated and consecrated to the worship of the true God, was perpetual (in other words it was to continue *until the institution of the Gospel dispensation*;) although the Jews were often extremely corrupt in their manners, as the numerous denunciations of the prophets sufficiently indicate." Again, ii. page 660. "The Galatian churches, not long after their members had been converted to the faith of the Gospel, were persuaded by some Judaizing teachers that it was absolutely necessary *they should be circumcised* and observe the entire law of Moses: hence great dissensions arose among the Galatian Christians. These circumstances led Saint Paul to write his Epistle to them; the design of which was, to prove the Jewish ceremonial law to be no longer obligatory; to convince them of the *moral and spiritual nature* of the Gospel, and thus to restore mutual good will among them." Qu. if baptism had come in lieu of circumcision could the apostle possibly have failed to say so in the Epistle to the Galatians?

DR. EMMONS. "There is no evidence in the New Testament that believers are now in the covenant of circumcision; but clear evidence to the contrary."

Chapin's Letters 81.

VENEMA. "From the difference between the former and present economies, it will clearly appear, that the genius of the New

CHAPTER IX.

PARTICULAR REMARKS ON MR. ELDER'S LETTERS II. III. AND VIII.

I. If the preceding Chapter has been understood, a multitude of minor errors with which Mr. Elder's pages abound hardly require a particular exposure; to some persons however a more special notice of them may be satisfactory, and we therefore devote the present chapter to that purpose. In letter II. page 3, appears:

1. The inference that "the covenant made with Abraham is the covenant of grace," because otherwise the Jewish "church might take him [Jehovah] for their God," "*and yet go to hell at last.*" Was there then no way of salvation but by the covenant with Abraham? What does Mr. Elder suppose the condition either of infants or adults to have been before ever the covenant of circumcision was heard of? Does he suppose, that all who lived before that covenant was made, were lost? Does he not know that "God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that worketh righteousness is accepted with him?" The preceding chapter we trust has shewn that the covenant with Abraham respected, primarily, the constitution of the Jewish dispensation, and not the means of salvation. It was always true that "the just shall live by his faith." So the promise in Jeremiah xxxi. expounded in Heb. viii. respects the formation of the Christian church, the means of salvation being still the same, that is, faith in a crucified deemer.

2. Mr. Elder infers "that the Abrahamic covenant was the covenant of grace, from the fact that circumcision, the token of that covenant, was a sign and seal of spiritual and eternal blessings," and in connection with this he quotes Rom. iv. 11, "He (Abraham) received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised;" and he thinks it incongruous that "a spiritual

Testament is abhorrent from an external covenant; wherefore it answers only to the spiritual part of the old economy."

Pæd. Exam. Vol. ii. p. 204, 245.

DR. OWEN. "Regeneration is expressly required in the Gospel, to give a right and privilege to an entrance into the church of Christ. Neither the church nor its privileges [being] continued as of old by carnal generation."

On Heb. vii. 11. Scrip. Guide 88.

seal" should be "affixed to a temporal covenant." What a mere play on words is this, and how entirely it loses sight of the spirit and meaning of scripture ! What has already been set forth in the preceeding chapter has we trust made it plain, that in consideration of *his faith*, God made the covenant with Abraham, that he should have a numerous posterity, and that they should inherit Canaan, and the token of circumcision was added to confirm that covenant. It was then a seal which respected spiritual things as regards Abraham, because it confirmed the fact of his faith, which was the ground of the promise; and it was continued to all his male descendants on the same ground; for, whenever repeated, it was a token that on account of Abraham's faith, God had made this promise. But then, what was the *promise itself* ? Primarily that the Israelites should possess Canaan, spiritual blessings being *involved only as a consequence*. The quotation from Romans is most unhappily chosen ; circumcision was a seal, it informs us, of the righteousness of the *faith* which Abraham had *before* he was circumcised. Who does not see that this could never again be said with relation to any other man. His descendants were all to be circumcised at eight days old. With respect to the Jewish church having always believed circumcision to have a spiritual import, we remark that if Mr. Elder means any other spiritual import than such as is now explained, he has answered himself in the latter part of this head. The *only proof* he gives of his assertion is their notion (Acts xv. 1.) that except christians were circumcised after the manner of Moses, *they could not be saved*," and with regard to this as he informs us himself " *they were mistaken*."

3. The Abrahamic covenant the covenant of grace, *because it constituted Abraham the father of all BELIEVERS*. But let it be remembered that if we baptize infants, we make him the father of those concerning whom *faith cannot be predicated*. Besides, we have already shewn, that the thing promised in the Abrahamic covenant was a *type* of the Christian church, this is the only connection between them. As to faith being required, and salvation promised, under the Abrahamic covenant, we repeat, that faith was required *in order to salvation*, but not as a *test of membership* in the Jewish nation ; in the Christian church it is the *sole test*. In the Jewish nation, salvation was obtained by as many as believed; in the Christian church, all, by its constitution, ought to be believers, and all therefore, who have any right to membership there, have salvation secured to them. " *He that believeth hath everlasting life.*"

4. *The same thing argued from the promises.*—With re-

ference to these, we answer with the general remark, that the object of both Jewish and Christian dispensations being, as before shewn, to foster religion, both are possessed of the same promises of a merely religious nature. The promise of Messiah as a Saviour, made to Abraham, is now fulfilled to the Christian church. The promise of a resurrection of the dead, of eternal life to believers, and many more, are made equally to both, and all the promises named by Mr. Elder under this head are of this character; none of them shew a continuance of the covenant of circumcision otherwise than as the things promised in that covenant were types of spiritual things; but the thing typified by Israel as a nation we have already shewn to be believers in Christ, those who have the law written in their hearts. In several of the promises quoted, however, Mr. Elder plainly confounds the promise of the Messiah with the covenant of circumcision, the error of which we have fully shewn in the preceding chapter, the two promises being perfectly distinct.

II. We next advance to Mr. Elder's Letter III. He there collects several arguments in support of the sameness of the churches, on which the following brief remarks are now offered:

1. *The figure of the olive tree* in Rom. xi. Because the believing Gentiles are represented as being grafted into the olive tree, Mr. Elder infers that the churches are the same. He fails to perceive that the *believing* Jews only are intended as the olive tree, into which the grafting takes place, *unbelievers*, as branches, being broken off, (see vs. 4, 5, 17, 28.) These *believing* Jews are called "a remnant according to the election of grace;" "the first fruit," which in v. 16, is said to be *holy*; in like manner as "the lump," that is the whole mass of the Jewish nation, when finally converted to God by faith, would be holy also. But now, let any one answer which is it that renders either the first fruit or the lump holy—faith or baptism? The answer must of course be faith, *faith only*; and what reason is there, then, to suppose, that when "the remnant according to the election of grace," became, through faith, a Christian church, infants would be baptized, or that any of the *ceremonies* of the Jewish dispensation, circumcision or any other, came with them? The circumcision of infants was but a ceremony of the Jewish dispensation, it did not either save or regenerate their souls. They entered the imperfect Jewish dispensation by virtue of their birth, and were therefore circumcised while infants; the believing Jews entered the Christian, the more glorious church, by faith, by a

spiritual not a natural birth. (See the note on page 76, Watson's view of the entrance into the Christian church being by faith.)

Again, Paul reminds his Ephesian brethren, that they had been aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, which implies, they were now members of that commonwealth, and shews as Mr. Elder thinks, that the Jewish commonwealth was the church of God ; we answer, by simply asking the question, did the Ephesians become members of the literal or the spiritual Israel ? If of the spiritual Israel, we ask again, what is it makes a man a member of this, faith or baptism, natural or spiritual birth ? Let the New Testament answer, " Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God."

2. *Faith in the Jewish and in the Christian church.*—Faith Mr. Elder ventures to assert was equally requisite to a standing in the Jewish and in the Christian church. Few pedobaptists even will agree with him. The command to Abraham was as follows :

Genesis xvii. 10, " Every man child among you shall be " circumcised. 13. He that is born in thy house, and he that " is bought with thy money must needs be circumcised." It was obeyed in the following manner ; (23 v.) " And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his " house, and all that were bought with his money, every male " among the men of Abraham's house ; and circumcised the " flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said " unto him. 24. And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, " when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 25. " And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was " circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin." Will Mr. Elder affirm these all to have been believers ? Believers in the Christian sense ? " He that believeth, says the Saviour, hath everlasting life?" " With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Were these circumcised dependants of Abraham all of the same sort as the three thousand on the day of Pentecost who *gladly received* the word and therefore were baptized ? Had Ishmael also faith ? Does faith produce the contumelious conduct for which he was afterwards, with his mother Hagar, ejected from his father's roof ? That faith was required of the Jews in order to *salvation*, that the want of faith led to that disobedience for which they were afterwards carried into captivity, and finally rejected as a nation, until the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, all admit. But it will cover scripture with perfect confusion to say, that faith, such as entitled

to admission into the first Christian churches, was required in order to continued standing in the Jewish church. We have seen it was not required of the adults admitted to that church; and the most cursory attention to the Mosaic ritual will shew, that, for all offences except those which were punished with death, all that was demanded by the law was restitution, if the sin had injured another, together with the appointed sacrifice, or ceremonial purifying. No other proof of faith or repentance than this was required in order to continuance in the commonwealth of Israel; see for instance Lev. vi. 1 to 7. God expected true repentance and faith, but the Jewish people had no right to demand it; while, on the other hand, in the Christian church, in the first place, we see faith and regeneration made the test of fellowship; "If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest," be baptized, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and in the second place, we see authority vested in the church by its officers, to reject such as by disobedience of the law of Christ, shewed that their faith was vain. Thus, Tit. iii. 10, "A man that is a heretick after the first and second admonition reject." Matt. xviii. 17, "— but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican;" and so, in many other places. More on this subject will come to be considered at the close of this treatise.

3. Salvation might doubtless be found in the Jewish church as Mr. Elder states, but that is not the present question, it is, was that church by its constitution composed of such as gave evidence of possessing real religion? They plainly were not, even at its very commencement; but on the contrary the Christian church was, from the first, composed of such as should be saved, or more properly the saved, (*sozomenous*, Acts ii. 47.)

4. *The promises.* One word is a sufficient answer to Mr. Elder's gloss, with relation to these. All promises to literal Israel are now fulfilled to spiritual Israel, the latter having come in place of the former; but spiritual Israel consists of believers.

5. *Love to God and love to man the character of a citizen of Zion under both dispensations.* It ought to be, but the Jewish dispensation did not make it a test of fellowship, the Christian does, for, when repentance, regeneration, and faith are required, the love of God and man is necessarily implied.— Who can believe that Paul would have baptized a man who was known to hate his brother and to express himself habitually towards him, in terms of bitterness? "He that hateth his

brother is a murderer." But such bitterness of heart, although it doubtless was hateful in God's sight, and would exclude from heaven, and would draw down the rebuke of good men, yet, did not exclude from fellowship in the Jewish commonwealth, unless it extended to acts of violence.

6. *The same employment in both.* We answer as before, it ought to be. But Christ "has obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, established on better promises." So that what ought to have been under the Jewish dispensation, but what that "law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh," God now effects by the power of faith in Christ, He "writes the law in the hearts" of the new, the spiritual Israel, and "puts it in their inward parts."

7. *When and how did the apostles leave the Jewish church, and enter into the Christian?* Answer—When they believed in Christ, they manifested, that they were the true children of Abraham in the higher, that is, the spiritual sense. Hence they with other similar disciples of Jesus formed the Christian church; thus fulfilling that of which the Jewish nation was a type, as Christ fulfilled all the shadows of the Jewish ritual; all which types and shadows vanished when the antitype appeared.

8. *The prophecies shew that the Jewish church was not to be destroyed and a new one formed.* Answer—So many of the Jewish people as believed in Christ were certainly not to be destroyed, but, as we have seen, were to be resolved into spiritual Israel, the Christian church; but surely all the types and shadows, all ceremonies peculiar to that imperfect dispensation waxed old and vanished away, and must have been understood to cease by the very force of the requisition made for members of the new state of things, "Except a man be born again," "God seeketh such to worship him as worship in spirit and in truth."

The only passage of scripture which Mr. Elder can find, as he informs us, (page 18,) as giving any countenance at all to the idea of the Jewish and Christian churches being distinct and separate bodies, is Eph. ii. 15, "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man." Which, he proceeds to tell us, does not speak of the Christian as another but as a new church. Well, this passage does certainly very definitely indeed speak of the Christian as a new church, and new, in what respect we would ask? Because it is now to practice Jewish rites under a new name? To use baptism in cases where circumcision was formerly used? Is

this the essence of its newness ? Or does it not consist rather in that which the passage from which he quotes brings to view, namely, that both Jews and Gentiles were reconciled to God in one body by the cross, v. 16 ; that through him both have access to God by one Spirit unto the Father, v. 18 ; that the church formed now of both Jews and Gentiles is a spiritual church resting on Jesus Christ as " the chief corner stone," v. 20 ; being " a holy temple in the Lord," v. 21 ; builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit," v. 22 ?

The passage proves demonstrably the spiritual character of the Christian church, and the utter inconsistency of Mr. Elder's endeavour to graft Jewish ceremonies upon it.

The conclusion of the whole matter, then, is, that in all matters which respect rites and ceremonies, in their whole fabric and organization, the Jewish congregation and the Christian church are essentially different, and that it is utterly fallacious to attempt to argue from one to the other in support of any ceremony, baptism, or any other, which the New Testament does not expressly enjoin ; still more to argue thus in favour of such a ceremony as infant baptism, utterly opposed as it is to the standard of Christ's ordinance, which is believer's baptism and that only, as well as to the very spirit and constitution of the Christian Church.

III. In Mr. Elder's Letter VIII, in which he affects to obviate the particular arguments against infant baptism, are several remarks which as they belong to this branch of our subject seem to fall very properly within the range of the present chapter. Those which are not specifically answered have received, or are to receive attention in other parts of this treatise.

Page 43. § 2. The observations respecting females being members of the Jewish church although not circumcised, partake of the fallacy which has already been exposed in the preceding chapter. All infants male and female were members of the Jewish nation by natural descent or birth. Christians are members of the church only by spiritual birth. Proving infants therefore, to have been members of the Jewish nation, does not prove them to be members of the Christian church. And even if it did, it cannot be right to administer baptism to them unless the New Testament shews it to be an ordinance intended for them. The text quoted goes far to prove the contrary, " They were baptized both men and women." Children are omitted, which hardly would have happened if they were in fact baptized.

Page 44. § 3. The objection made by Baptists, that if baptism comes instead of circumcision, infants should be baptized on the eighth day after their birth, is a *just* objection against Mr. Elder's argument of the sameness of the churches, because the only sameness between them that could avail Mr. Elder, would be a sameness in ceremonies. If the ceremonies are the same then, every thing must be continued that is *not expressly* altered.

Page 44. § 4. Under this head Mr. Elder at length comes boldly out to acknowledge his real sentiments. Baptists argue that if infant baptism is deduced from circumcision, then the baptism of all the members of a household, servants and slaves as well as children will follow. Mr. Elder is afraid to answer to this, "no it will not, because *faith* as a requisite to baptism is clearly stated in the New Testament," inasmuch as this would exclude infants; he therefore fearlessly adopts the hazardous conclusion, that, HE SEES 'NO EVIL THAT WOULD RESULT FROM IT.' This is a height of extravagance in order to support a favorite theory unequalled, we apprehend, in the history of the Protestant church. Those who do not hold to *evangelical* sentiments, with whom religion has degenerated into a form, are indeed *easily* satisfied with the qualifications of those whom they baptize, or receive to communion; yet all professedly require faith and repentance. But here is Mr. Elder, in the nineteenth century, making a more desperate plunge than the coldest formalist. On this ground we are happy to know that he will have not a few of his paedobaptist brethren at war with him. The numerous Congregationalists and Presbyterians of America, and the Independants in England, abhor such a principle; and indeed the formularies and standards, if not the practice of every Protestant church, we believe, require repentance and faith in order to the baptism of adults; they are distinctly stated as pre-requisites in the Catechism of the Church of England.—Does not even the Romish church professedly make the same demand? If Mr. Elder does not mean to come to this result, then he ought distinctly to have explained himself. In the latter part of his observations on this head, he alludes to a West India planter having his slaves *instructed* in the principles of Christianity and baptized. What does he mean by *instructed*? Does he mean so taught, as to become possessed of repentance and faith, as to be made "new creatures," by faith in Christ? Such does not *appear* to be his meaning; and any other is utterly inconsistent with the nature of the Christian religion, and with both the practice and the professed standards of the church universal.

Page 45. § 5 The remark about positive precepts, has already received an answer in our first chapter. We have indeed, repeatedly shewn that there is in fact, no such *continuance* of the principles of the Jewish dispensation, as to render a *positive command* for the baptism of infants unnecessary. Even if our Lord had directed his disciples to go into all the world and *make disciples* to such a system as christianity, which can mean nothing but to bring them by instruction to *possess repentance and faith in the gospel*, i. e. to be *real christians*, CIRCUMCISING them in the name of the Trinity, it is very *questionable* whether the apostles would have felt themselves warranted to circumcise *children*. If they should think they were, it would clearly be inconsistent with the terms of the commission; but then let it not be forgotten, that such is *not* the command; he directs them to baptize; this they had already been doing; they knew what it was; by Mr. Elder's own acknowledgment, as well as that of Mr. Scott in his commentary, they had not baptized infants previously to the day of Pentecost, so that there could be no hesitation in their minds on this ground; and when it became clearly revealed to them, that all the members of the new, spiritual, Israel were to be "*taught of the Lord from the least to the greatest*," there can be no question as to whether they would regard infants among those who were thus instructed; of course they could not be so. We admit that the Lord did not *destroy* the Old Testament church and scriptures; we say he *fulfilled* them, in himself and in his spiritual church. We desire to fulfil them, but not literally to practice their ceremonies, either in whole or in part.

Mr. Elder here repeats the never ending story about the necessity of recurrence to the Old Testament to sanction the Sabbath, and cites the case of those who, not doing so, have been led to consider it not binding, as well as those who finding no positive precept for keeping the first day of the week or the Christian Sabbath, still keep the seventh. Had Mr. Elder though formerly a Baptist minister himself, never heard the answers to his objection? He passes them without remark as though they never had been made. With regard to the last mentioned case, we reply that a law of Christ may be as well set forth by example as by precept; and the assembling of the Christians for worship on the first day of the week, and its consecration by the title of the Lord's day, are both exhibited in the New Testament, and are a sufficient warrant for the practice. And as to the former case we answer, as we have already stated in the first chapter of this treatise, that the consecration of a seventh portion of time to God is a *moral*

duty of *perpetual* obligation. It existed before the Mosaic law; it is there incorporated in the decalogue as resting on the same foundation as every other moral precept; and from its own nature as symbolical of a heavenly rest, it must of course continue until that heaven of which it is a type, shall be possessed by the whole company of the redeemed. The particular day appears to have been a matter of secondary moment, resting on the same footing with other ceremonial observances, and it therefore departed with the rest of the Mosaic shadows, when Christ the Lord of the Sabbath appeared. The old measure of time commenced from the day that the *physical world* was complete; the *new* measure, from the day when Christ's *spiritual work* was perfected, by his resurrection from the dead.

Page 46. § 6. Mr. Elder's statement about God's right to require unregenerate persons to repent and believe is wholly irrelevant; he knew that the Baptists as a denomination have never ceased to contend for the right of the Almighty to require obedience from all his creatures.

Under this head we are sorry to see a gross perversion of scripture. It respects the following words of Mark xvi. 15, 16, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned," which are evidently the account by Mark, a different witness, of the same commission of the Saviour to his apostles, which is recorded in Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

Whether Mr. Elder regards this as a different commission from that stated in Matt. xxviii. he does not clearly inform us. The direction in Mark, he tells us, however, was *peculiar to the apostles*, and respects only persons *come to years of understanding*. That it respects *ONLY such persons*, is indeed plain enough, and is doubtless the reason of this desperate struggle to evade its force. But it is impossible to make it appear that that this passage is *peculiar* to the apostles, without shewing that the commission in Matt. xxviii. is also confined to them. And if this be Mr. Elder's sentiment, then he must suppose that there is no *existing* commission for baptism at all. Both Matthew and Mark represent the words, which they respectively relate, as addressed to the *eleven*, which is the *only* expression that might incline one, at first, to suppose that the direction was intended for the apostles only. This however is controverted by the *fact* that others besides the apostles *did* actually baptize, with the divine sanction; Philip was not an apostle, but he baptized the eunuch in the wilderness, and multitudes of men and women at Samaria.

So, in the Corinthian church, Paul although the instrument of the conversion of that church, baptized but few.

The only thing mentioned in Mark which is not found in Matthew, of any consequence to the present inquiry, respects the signs that should follow those that believe ; but what is more common, than to find one of the Evangelists relating a circumstance belonging to the same transaction which another omits? We know it to be an historical fact, that the signs, here spoken of, followed the ministration of the apostles, whether they acted under the commission in Mark or Matthew, which shews that the prediction of our Saviour respecting it belonged to both. Mr. Elder's mode of reasoning on this passage, if correct, would prove that faith was not necessary now to salvation ; for our Saviour says, he that believeth not shall be damned, and goes on to add, that such and such signs should follow them that believe ; but because such signs do not now occur, Mr. Elder argues that this passage was confined to the apostles ; then we have no right now to say on the authority of this passage, that he that believeth not shall be damned. And if in reply to this Mr. Elder should allege, that so much as is applicable to the present times must continue in force, the obvious answer is, how, then, can we know that the whole is not in force, except that the providence of God has caused the *miraculous signs* of faith to cease. This was the only part of the passage that related solely to that age ; all the rest applies to us, and must therefore be taken as explanatory of the passage in Matt. xxviii. We venture to say that such is the first impression of every one who reads the two passages together, if unpossessed with any previous prejudice. Matthew tells us indeed that Jesus met the eleven in a mountain of Galilee ; Mark, that he appeared to them when they sat at meat ; but there is no discrepancy here, the probability is that they remained in the mountain sufficiently long to make food necessary, and perhaps indeed the mountain was inhabited, it is not called a desert mountain. And if we should admit the possibility of the words being spoken by the Saviour *at different times and places*, still the *subject* of them is so manifestly the same, that it is using violence to scripture to give them the interpretation for which Mr. Elder contends. At the close of the paragraph, however, he admits " that we justly infer " from this passage " that it is our duty as Christians, to send the gospel to the destitute." This is in effect to admit that all that can now apply does apply, which is the same thing as to allow all that we claim from the passage. It is therefore a test of fitness for the ordinance of baptism, and proves that those only who believe ought to be baptized.

It is true that this passage plainly respects adults only, and pedobaptists urge, that as the Saviour is speaking of adults and not of infants, it affords no proof that infants were not baptized. But how can it be supposed, that if our Saviour intended baptism to be administered to infants as well as believers, he would fail to say so, on such an occasion as this in Mark, when, otherwise, the words he used would necessarily lead his hearers to suppose that believers were the only subjects of baptism, especially when, as is admitted by Mr. Elder, John the Baptist and the apostles had previously not baptized infants ? *

CHAPTER X.

TRUE STATEMENT OF HISTORICAL EVIDENCE CONCERNING INFANT BAPTISM ; INFANT COMMUNION ; PEDOBAPTIST EVIDENCE AGAINST INFANT BAPTISM.

I. There is no principle more important to the welfare of the church of Christ, than that the Bible is the only rule of Christian faith and practice. For this principle the Reformers of the sixteenth century earnestly contended, as the only one that could preserve the church from the endless inventions of men. Ecclesiastical history shews that a close adherence to

* That Mr. Elder's interpretation of Mark xvi. is not adopted by pedobaptist critics of authority may appear by reference to Doddridge, who in his paraphrase of the passages in Mark and Matthew incorporates them together as relating to the same subject ; to Kuinoel, who refers the words "them that believe" to the apostles, not their hearers, so making the signs to follow the apostles preaching, (see his Com. on the place in Mark) ; and to Storr, quoted in Kuinoel, who considers the word *tois* in the expression *tois pisteuousin*, "them that believe," as capable of being rendered so as to respect what would *sometimes* but not *always* happen. Both these last constructions shew that these commentators considered the commission as a general one, and the circumstance of the signs which *should follow*, as having only a *limited* application. Even Mr. Scott, though not generally regarded we believe as the best critic in the world, and who was as likely perhaps as any one to give the passage a turn in favour of pedobaptist views, has the following commentary on the passage in Mark, "these words — certainly contain an express commission to preach his salvation and kingdom to all nations of the earth, and to men of every description and character as far as they were able : and they *imply a command to the same effect, to all their successors* in the sacred ministry."

this principle is not a needless caution, Error had begun and was already prolific even in the apostles' time. This appears from the first part of John's gospel, intended, plainly, to oppose those who distorted the true doctrine concerning Christ, as well as from many other parts of the New Testament ; to the prevalency of error, Jude expressly testifies in verse 4 of his Epistle, " For " says he " there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

Even Dr. Wall, the celebrated advocate for infant baptism, admits that the conceit of Trine Immersion, and the ceremony of giving the baptized person milk and honey after he came out of the water, were " constantly used by the most ancient Christians," (vol. i. 29.) And from Mosheim also a pedobaptist, in his account of the first century, that is, the first hundred years after the birth of Jesus Christ, we learn, that there were false teachers, " who acquired credit and strength by degrees ; and even from the first dawn of the gospel, laid, imperceptibly, the foundations of those sects whose animosities and disputes produced, afterwards, such trouble and perplexity in the Christian church," (Eccles. Hist. vol. i. page 132.)* And in his account of the second century, he informs us that the " venerable simplicity [of the Christian system,] was not of long duration, its beauty was gradually effaced by the laborious efforts of human learning, and the dark subtilties of imaginary science," (vol. i. page 183.) To which century (the second) he attributes the introduction of " pious frauds," (page 197,) the new modelling of discipline according to that " used in the heathen mysteries," (page 199,) and the addition of " many unnecessary rites and ceremonies," " the introduction of which was extremely offensive to wise and good men," (page 200.) From that time forward the history abounds with the most sickening accounts of the increasing corruptions of the church, the impositions of the clergy, and the introduction of various Jewish and Heathen ceremonies, for the purpose of increasing their numbers by a compromise with existing prejudices. (See Mosheim, vol. i. pages 192, 198, 201, 202, 204, 205, 212, 266, 269, 365, and many other places.) This testimony, which no one disputes, shews the extreme ignorance of the ecclesiastical history which Mr. Elder betrays, when he tells us (Letter vii. page 37,) that, " great changes in large

* We quote from Maclaine's translation, London Edit. 1825.

bodies of men, seldom or never take place suddenly ; it is by slow degrees generally, that large bodies change their principles or practices, especially in things pertaining to religion." His assertion is contrary to known facts ; even in the apostles time were sown the seeds of the most frightful changes ; and we see, therefore, the absolute necessity of an exclusive resort to the scriptures, as the only standard of what is right in Christian doctrine and practice ; and also how to account for the early rise of the practice of infant baptism.

In resorting indeed to the evidence afforded by ecclesiastical history, we are too apt to forget, that the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and their Epistles, the whole of the New Testament in fact, are *historical records* of the first age of the church—the *only* records which can be fully relied on as coming from an *uncorrupted* source ; and that, if infant baptism was practiced in that age, it is the most improbable thing imaginable that *no* instance of it should be there noticed, especially when we remember that it is quite in accordance with the usage of the sacred writers, to mention children in those cases in which they are really concerned.* Every passage however in the New Testament that respects the present inquiry, we have now diligently searched, and have seen, that no such instance and no allusion to such custom any where occurs : In coming, then, to the examination of later records, we have a right to feel like those who have already obtained a satisfactory answer to their inquiry ; for, if now any notice of this practice shall appear, the presumption is, that it must be a mere human invention, one of those numerous innovations of which Mosheim speaks, arising either from a Jewish or a Heathen source, and which so soon as the apostles had sunk to rest, if not before, began to corrupt the purity of the church.

One of the earliest errors in doctrine, and one which seemed to creep in unnoticed, was that which confounded together inward *spiritual* religion and its *outward* rites, so as to give a sort of *saving* influence to the latter ; thus many, at the present day, hold baptismal regeneration, notwithstanding that express passage from I. Peter iii. 21, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (*not* the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God.)" It is easy to see, this error once established, how naturally infant baptism would follow. In this way too arose *clinic* baptism, that is, the baptism of the sick in bed, by affusion, instead of immersion, the ancient and scriptural usage,

* See Note at the end.

under the idea that baptism was essential to salvation, and *must* therefore to be performed in *some* way, however contrary to its original institution.

No unquestionable proof however, of infants being baptized occurs until the middle of the third century, in the time of Cyprian; for the testimony of Tertullian, at the latter end of the second or beginning of the third century, although often mentioned as such, cannot strictly be regarded as evidence of that practice, but only of an approach *towards* it. He reasons against the baptism of *young children*, (*parrulos*.) Now, Mr. Robinson in his history of baptism has clearly shewn, that *infantulus*, a stronger diminutive than *parrulus*, is constantly used by the writers of that day to designate young people in whatever stage of minority, (chapters xix. and xxi. see also Wall, chap. xviii.) Besides, the language of Tertullian intimates that he is *not* writing of infants that cannot speak, for he mentions as an argument of those who desired baptism for these *parruli*, the passage "give to every one that *asketh* thee;" to which he replies by shewing that it had relation to a different subject. It thus appears probable that the absurdity of giving baptism to an unconscious babe, who could not even *ask* for it, had not as yet entered any man's head, this was a corruption of rather later date. Tertullian then, affords us no evidence of the existence of infant baptism. But even if it be admitted that it is infant baptism which he opposes, yet it ought to be distinctly borne in mind, that his observation goes expressly to prove that the practice of baptizing very young persons, was only *beginning* to be introduced or contended for; for if the *apostles and first churches* had practiced infant baptism, it would by that time have become the universal custom, and it cannot be believed that Tertullian who was a rigid observer of the customary forms, would have resisted it.

Tertullian then at the end of the second or beginning of the third century, is a *direct* instance of one opposing the introduction of the new practice of giving baptism to young children, and thus it has been regarded by the *pedobaptist* compilers of the chronological tables appended to Mosheim's Ecclesiastical history, who among the remarkable events of the second century, place the custom of infant baptism and the use of sponsors. Some persons hope to invalidate this testimony of Tertullian by alleging that he was a heretic, but this is quite unfair, for though he did afterwards join the Montanists, yet, at the time he wrote his book *De Baptismo*, in which the above testimony is contained, he was a member of the *so called*, ortho-



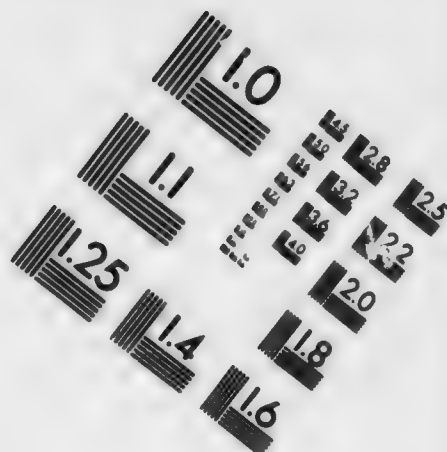
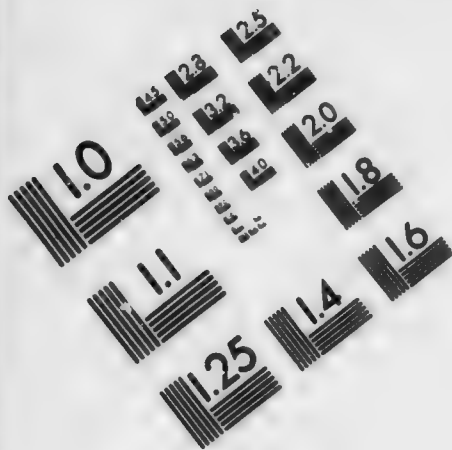
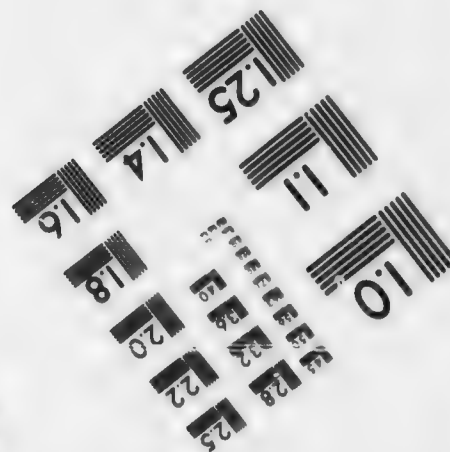
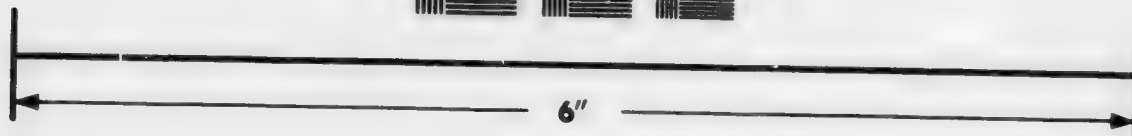
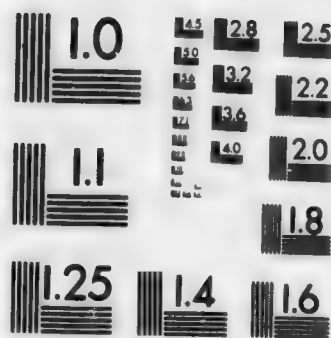


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dox church, and wrote this book expressly against Quintilla a Montanist.* (See Robinson's Hist. of Baptism, 166, 170.)

Mr. Pond, † as Mr. Elder informs us, cites Tertullian as admitting that infant baptism was to be allowed in cases of necessity. If it be so, it is a proof of what we have already named, the early error concerning baptismal regeneration ; for, unless there was danger to the child's soul in case of its dying unbaptized, what necessity for its baptism could exist ? But the truth is, the words attributed to Tertullian and enclosed in brackets in the following sentence, *quid enim necesse est, [si non tam necesse] sponsores etiam periculo ingeri*, "for why should the sponsors [except in cases of necessity] be exposed to danger," are by good judges deemed spurious. Wall, though he afterwards contends for retaining them, omits them from his quotation, and indeed they would be inconsistent with the whole strain of Tertullian's remarks ; for we cannot believe, that if he deemed baptism so necessary, he would expose the soul of the infant to danger by delay, or those of unmarried and widowed persons, to whom also he advises delay : a sudden sickness might, at that rate, carry them to perdition for the want of baptism !

Mr. Pond, it seems also, argues the great prevalence of infant baptism, from the following expression in Tertullian, *Quid festinat innocens alas ad remissionem peccatorum?* "Why

* As Mr. Elder hints about an earlier intimation of the practice of infant baptism by *Hermas*, who, he pretends, was contemporary with Paul, we here give the following quotation to shew what degree of credit is to be given to this insinuation, (Mosheim, vol i. p. 113.) "The work which is entitled, The Shepherd of Hermas, because the angel who bears the principal part in it is represented in the form and habit of a Shepherd, was composed in the second century by Hermas, who was brother to Pius, bishop of Rome. This whimsical and visionary writer has taken the liberty to invent several dialogues or conversations between God and the Angels, in order to insinuate in a more easy and agreeable manner, the precepts which he thought useful and salutary, into the minds of his readers. But indeed, the discourse which he puts into the mouths of those celestial beings, is more insipid and senseless than what we commonly hear among the meanest of the multitude."

† As this is the first time Mr. Pond's name appears on our pages, and Mr. Elder (Letters, page 66.) insinuates that his book was never answered, we beg to inform the public, and remind Mr. Elder, that Dr. Chapin's able letters on the subject of infant baptism, were subsequent to Pond's treatise, as appears on page 18 of the Strictures on Mr. Moore's reply, and are therefore in fact an answer to Pond though not personally addressed to him.

does [or should] that innocent age hasten to [the sign of] forgiveness of sins?" But the idiom of the latin *permits* such a translation as we have put between the brackets, and the circumstances of the present case *require* it. If infant baptism was practised by the apostles, if the infants, doubtless pretty numerous, of the "three thousand," and of the "five thousand," and of "the multitudes" of believers, both men and women, mentioned in the Acts, at Jerusalem and at Samaria, and elsewhere, who joined the church about the same time, were baptized as well as their parents—if, in a word, it had been from the very first the practice of the churches, resting on the Abrahamic covenant, and the custom of the Jews thereupon, as pedobaptists allege, it is a thing too improbable to be believed, that Tertullian, at this time a member of the orthodox church, would endeavour to shake the practice: in fact his language is not at all that of a man making such an attempt. In the other cases in which he recommends delay, those of unmarried and widowed persons, there was room for counsel—These latter were adults, in their instance *some* time, from the very nature and necessity of the case, must always have been taken to ascertain whether they *were* believers. The amount of time employed for this purpose, was a thing that would of course vary with circumstances, and accordingly Tertullian endeavours to shew the particular reason why Paul was baptized so speedily, and remarks that in the case of the Eunuch baptized by Philip, there was in fact, no haste, he having been at the temple at Jerusalem to worship, and having previously been instructed by Philip; as well as that this instance was peculiar inasmuch as Philip was divinely directed in it. (See the whole passage from Tertullian in Robinson's Hist. of Baptism, page 170.)

The testimony supposed by Mr. Elder (page 38) to be derived from Origen, who flourished in the third century, is also too unsatisfactory to ground any confidence upon it. It is acknowledged by all parties that no mention of infant baptism is contained in any of Origen's works that have come down to us in the original Greek. The passages cited as a proof are contained in translations, many of which, all admit to be *spurious*, and whether those, that are *not wholly* false, do not contain many interpolations, is a matter which, to say the least of it, is exceedingly questionable. The *only* evidence offered by Mr. Elder that they are not so, is the opinion of Mr. Pond a *pedobaptist*, against this we oppose the following contradictory testimony.

Du Pin, also a *pedobaptist*,—Those latin works we have "are translated by Rufinus and others with so much liberty, that

it is a difficult matter to discover what is Origen's own, from what has been foisted in by interpreters." And a little after he adds " St. Hierom's [Jerome's] versions are not more exact." (Hist. Eccles. writ. cent. iii. p. 100. Booth's Pedobaptism examined, p. 99.)

Huetius, a pedobaptist, when speaking of Origen's remains in general, has the following remark : " they are very imperfect and much abused, or else changed and deformed ' y abominable translations." (Critici Sacri L. ii. c. xiii. Pedobap. exam. 2 vol. p. 100.)

Vossius, a pedobaptist, having produced a passage from Origen's Homilies upon the Romans in favour of infant baptism, adds : " But concerning Origen we say the less, because the things that might be quoted are not extant in the Greek."—(Thes. Theol. de Pedobap. Pars ii. Thes. viii. p. 433. Pedobap. Exam. vol. ii. p. 98.)

Dr. Chapin, a baptist, whose honesty is unimpeached, informs us, " I have read Wall, Mosheim, Du Pin, Gale and others, and find ample proofs that the translations of the writings of Origen are challenged as too corrupt to furnish any ground of reliance."—(Strictures on Moore's reply to his letters 52.)

Here are three pedobaptists and one baptist, men of learning and celebrity, opposed to Mr. Elder's single pedobaptist witness, Pond, on the point of the doubtful character of testimony from Origen as regards the present subject ; to which we may add that as the original Greek of Origen contains *no* mention of infant baptism, and the pretended translations confessedly an abundance of instances where it is mentioned, this circumstance alone should induce us to suspect the accuracy of any translation where mention of it occurs, for it is hardly to be believed that it would appear *so often* in those of Origen's works which are said to have been translated, and never *once* in those which have come down to us in the original Greek.

We add a word here on the testimony of Augustine and Pelagius, for the latter, though not mentioned by Mr. Elder, is often relied on by pedobaptists. These persons lived in the latter part of the fourth, and the beginning of the fifth century, and as at that period errors and innovations in faith and practice grievously abounded, their testimony would be unworthy of notice, were it not adduced as an admission, by men of great learning, that they never had *heard* of the most impious heretics denying baptism to infants. A careful examination of the history of that time, and of the warm controversies between Augustine and Pelagius, will satisfactorily shew that there is no such as-

sertion made. Augustine was eager to establish infant baptism as being in his view an important argument for original sin, which he supposed to be washed away in baptism! And he gives it as *his opinion* that "the custom was doubtless delivered by our Lord and his apostles," but quotes no authority for this, (Wall i. 288.) and is just as confident, as we shew hereafter, in favor of *infant communion*. Pelagius in repudiating the charges against him, denies that he ever heard even of any impious heretic to say that children could be saved without Christ.—That this is his meaning Dr. Chapin has clearly shewn in his *Strictures* p. 57 : Indeed it is impossible to suppose the contrary, for if he was a man of such universal knowledge as is alleged, he must have heard of the opposition made by Tertulian against infant baptism in his book *de baptismo*, as well as of the fact that the Manichees denied the external ordinance of baptism altogether. His opponents in the heat of violent controversy, as is too often the case, laboured to graft on his words and sentiments more than he meant; in this case, to represent him as denying the necessity of the redemption of Christ, and this therefore it must be which he is eager to deny. It ought also to be remembered that the words of Pelagius have not come down to us in any other shape than as quoted by Augustine, his vehement opponent, which must necessarily lessen in some degree the confidence with which we receive them.

We return then to the time of Cyprian, in the middle of the *third* century, as affording the first evidence of the practice of infant baptism. Cyprian was bishop of Carthage, in which city a council of 66 bishops assembled in the year 253, and in answer to a question addressed to them by Fidus, a country bishop, who doubted whether it was right to baptize infants until they were eight days old, decided that they might be baptized earlier. Now, the very fact of it being still a question, two hundred and fifty three years after the birth of Christ, at what age infants ought to be baptized, implies that the custom, if not then first introduced, must have been very recent, or certainly the time of performing the ordinance would have been settled; the absurd and childish sort of reasoning, too, introduced into the letter that embodies that decision, must prevent any candid and sensible christian from regarding these 66 bishops as the wisest interpreters of the law of Christ. Nothing appears, in Ecclesiastical history, to induce the belief that even under the authority of this council of Carthage, the practice of infant baptism obtained generally in the Christian world, until a considerable time after. From a great amount of evidence which shews this, we select the following:

Gregory Nazienzen, who flourished in the fourth century, advises the baptism of infants to be deferred until they should be three years old "or thereabouts, when they are capable to hear and answer some of the holy words."—(Wall, vol. i. p. 141.) It is plain then, that the practice was not general, and indeed the style of the whole quotation which Wall gives, shows that infant baptism was by no means a settled matter. Some one is supposed to answer the following question, "What say you to those that are yet infants, and are not in capacity to be either sensible of the grace or of the miss of it? Shall we baptize them too?" To which Gregory replies, "Yes by all means *if any danger make it requisite.*" And shortly after he gives his advice in ordinary cases where there is no danger, to *defer baptism* until three years as quoted above. Who can believe that the question would have been either asked or answered in the *fourth* century, if it had been a settled practice from the very first? 400 years is a long time to settle customs: Let any man look back from this time in the history of our own country, and ask himself what he would think if people were now questioning whether it was a settled practice of the English or Presbyterian churches to baptize infants? Would he believe it possible that the custom could possibly have existed in those churches undisturbed for 400 years? In fact it is impossible to read Ecclesiastical history with care, and an unbiassed mind, without coming to the conclusion at which even learned pedobaptists have arrived, that infant baptism crept in not altogether without opposition, but for the most part quietly, together with the multitude of innovations that so rapidly deformed the Christian church. It ought also to be borne in mind when any object that the resistance seems small in proportion to the greatness of the innovation, that the spirit of the times unhappily prompted to great compromise with heathen and Jewish ceremonies as we have already seen, and also that the change was not of so striking a sort as was likely to call for violent opposition. Infant Baptism came in as an *addition* to the original practice, not as a *change* of it. It by no means, therefore, resembled the change which Baptists now labour to make—*this* is to reform, or rather do away, an old abuse; *that* was the introduction *in company with* adult baptism of a ceremony that flattered the feelings of human nature, soothed the affections of mothers, and other relations, and harmonized with the early and ruinous error which gave a *saving efficacy* to forms—the basis on which the Romish church so soon raised the stupendous fabric of her errors.

To what is here adduced from Gregory Nazienzen, we

may add that after the most diligent endeavour on the part of Dr. Wall, to make it appear that he (Gregory) was born before his father's baptism, he at last gives the matter up in despair ; and certainly if Gregory himself may be the best judge of the matter, the passages given from his poem concerning his own life make it plain enough that he was not born until after that event ; Wall admits that he was not *baptized in infancy*, which he acknowledges to have been the case also as respects Gregory's sister Gorgonia, and brother Cæsarius, so that here is a whole family and that the family of a celebrated and orthodox bishop, Gregory, bishop of Nazianzum, who in the fourth century after Christ, were not baptized in infancy, although their parents were Christians. Many writers adduce numerous other cases of like sort, but as we have not had time to examine them we shall let this specimen suffice.

The next proof we bring is Basil, archbishop of Cæsarea, also of the fourth century. In one of his Lent sermons, he uses the following language :—

“ What time for baptism, so proper as Easter ? For this the church lifts up her voice, and calls from far her sons, that those whom she once brought forth, she may now bring forth again ; and feed with substantial food, them whom she hath hitherto fed with the milk of the first elements of religion. To you the apostle says, Repent and be baptized, every one of you—Why do you delay ? Why do you deliberate ? What do you wait for ? Instructed in the doctrine of Christ from your infancy, are you not yet acquainted with it ? Will you continue your trials to old age ? Last year you deferred it till this ; do you now intend to put off your baptism till the next ? ”

“ That these were the children of professors, and not of pagans, cannot be doubted. They are said to be those, whom the church once brought forth, and fed with food, and had instructed from their infancy, [they being the children of church members.] And that these children were to be baptized on the ground of their own profession and desire, is evident from the whole Lent service. They were scrutinized, or examined, from time to time, during seven days. They were directed to pray, to observe their orders, and to profess their faith in the creed of the church. But how could all this happen, if professors then baptized all their infants ?—(Chapin 103.)

“ If there were none,” says Dr. Chapin, (Strictures 61,) “ who opposed infant baptism from the fourth to the eleventh century, how shall we account for the repeated decrees of councils during this period, against such opposers ? One article of the council of Mela, held in the fifth century, is in the fol-

lowing words : ' Also it is the pleasure of the bishops to order, that whosoever denieth that infants newly born of their mothers are to be baptized ; or saith that baptism is administered for the remission of their own sins, but not on account of original sin, derived from Adam, and to be expiated by the laver of regeneration, be (anathema) cursed ! ' The first part of this decree clearly supposes that some denied that infants newly born were to be baptized. And the latter, that others, as the Pelagians, denied that baptism could wash away original sin. Again, in the sixth century, by the council of Lerida, in the archbishoprick of Tarragona, it was decreed, ' that such as had fallen into the prevarication of *anabaptism*, if they should return to the church, should be received as the council of Nice had enacted.' Indeed the first ecclesiastical canon in Europe for the baptism of babes, I believe was passed in the year 514, by a council composed of a few Spanish bishops, ' who met at Girona in Catalonia, and framed and subscribed ten rules of discipline.' The fourth is ' an agreement to baptize catechumens only at Easter and Pentecost, except in cases of sickness.' In the fifth, they agreed, ' in case infants were ill, and would not suck their mother's milk, if they were offered, to baptize them, even though it were the day they were born.' This agreement was binding only on such as assented to it.

" But Charlemagne carried the subject still further, and in A. D. 789, passed a law to compel his subjects, on pain of death, to be baptized themselves ! And ' by heavy fines obliged them to baptize their children within the year of their birth.' " The following evidence is conclusive on this point.

" Cardinal Hosius, *president of the council of Trent*.—" If the truth of religion were to be judged by the readiness and cheerfulness, which a man of any sect shows in suffering, then the opinion and persuasion of no sect can be truer or surer, than that of the Anabaptists ; since there have been none, for these *twelve hundred* years past, that have been more grievously punished, or that have more cheerfully and steadfastly undergone, and even offered themselves to, the most cruel sorts of punishment, than these people. Nor is this heresy a modern thing ; it existed in the time of Austin.' "(Judson, p. 61.) The cardinal probably alludes, among others, to the Waldenses, many of whom denied infant baptism and had suffered severe persecutions.

" The history of catechumens also furnishes strong proof against the antiquity of infant baptism. Catechumens were the lowest order of christians in the primitive church. They had some title to the common name of christians, being a degree

above pagans, and not hereticks, though not consummated by baptism. Among this class none were admitted, who had been washed in the sacred laver. But Mr. Buck and the Cyclopaedia tell us that, 'The children of ancient *believing* parents were admitted *catechumens*, as soon as they were capable of instruction. But at what age those of heathen parents might be admitted is not so clear.' (See Buck's Theol. Dict.) After these children of believers had passed through several stages of instruction, and had a competency of knowledge and faith, they were scrutinized, or examined in the strictest manner, and then with various ceremonies they were admitted to baptism on the ground of their faith and confession. But if believing parents did in the primitive church, baptize all their children in infancy, why did they send them to the school of the catechumens to receive that education, which was to *qualify* them for that ordinance?" (Chapin, Strictures 65.) And why did the practice respecting catechumens disappear, but because it was succeeded by infant baptism?

II. The above testimony is sufficient to shew that infant baptism did not begin with the apostles, and that its introduction was not altogether, as some have alleged, silent and unresisted; and while it is admitted that in the middle of the third century it began to make its appearance, we would call the attention of those who pause at this circumstance, as though it affords any reasonable argument for the practice, not only to the early introduction into the Christian church of a multitude of errors both in doctrine and practice, but particularly to the fact that if *infant baptism*, was an early practice—*infant communion* was equally so.

"Chillingworth says, 'Saint Augustine I am sure held the *communicating* of infants, as much apostolic tradition, as the *baptizing* of them.—The eucharist's necessity for infants—was taught by the consent of the eminent fathers of some ages without any opposition from any of their contemporaries, and was delivered by them, not as doctors, but as witnesses; not as their opinion, but as apostolic tradition.'"

"Says St. Austin, 'No one who professes himself a christian of the catholic faith, denies or doubts that children, without receiving the grace of regeneration in Christ, and without eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, [*i. e.* without baptism and the Lord's supper] have not life in them, and therefore are liable to everlasting punishment.' And again, 'The christians of Africa do well call baptism itself one's salvation; and the sacrament of Christ's body, one's life. From whence

is this, but, as I suppose, from that ancient and apostolical tradition, by which the churches of Christ do naturally hold, that without baptism, and partaking of the Lord's table, none can come either to the kingdom of God, or to salvation, and eternal life?" "This is, without doubt, clear evidence that St. Austin was satisfied that infant communion was as necessary and as much apostolic as infant baptism."

Dr. Mosheim on this subject, in his account of the *second* century says, "It appears by many and undoubted testimonies that this holy rite [the Lord's supper] was looked upon as essential to salvation; and when this is duly considered, we shall be less disposed to censure, as erroneous, the opinion of those who have affirmed that the Lord's supper was administered to infants during this century." In his account of the *third* century, he says, "It — was considered in all [the churches] as of the highest importance, and as essential to salvation; for which reason it was even thought proper to administer it to infants."—Vol. i. 210, 291.

"Dr. John Edwards says, 'Infant communicating was a catholic doctrine. Herein all the fathers agreed. They, misunderstanding and misapplying Christ's words, John vi. 53, held that the sacrament of the Lord's supper was to be administered to infants and children, and that it was necessary for their salvation; accordingly they made them partakers of that ordinance. Venema says, 'in the ancient church, these two sacraments, in respect of the subjects, were never separated the one from the other.'"

"Buddoeus. 'It is manifest, that in the ancient church, it was usual to give the eucharist to infants, which custom arose about the third century.'"

"The history of the church, written by an impartial hand, says, 'In the time of Cyprian (254) it was usual for children and sucking infants to receive the sacrament. And therefore when a little sucking girl refused to taste the sacramental wine, the deacon violently forced it down her throat.' p. 112. (Chap. Strict. p. 65, 66.)

History, then "traces both these ceremonies to one common origin, namely necessity; and supports both by the same process of argument" so that it "is impossible to invalidate the historical arguments for infant communion without ruining to the same extent the arguments in favour of infant baptism."

To this it may be added, that it is impossible "to argue against infant communion even from scripture, without confuting all the favourite arguments in favor of infant baptism. Is

it said that infants ought not to partake of the Lord's supper, because they cannot manifest any evidence of repentance, faith and ability to discern the Lord's body, the prerequisites for this ordinance?—are they not equally incapable of manifesting faith and repentance, which are just as much demanded for baptism as they are for communion? Do the scriptures teach us to administer the eucharist to none but the visibly penitent, and at the same time direct us to baptize some *penitents*, and some who are manifestly *impenitent*? Nor can infant baptism be supported without furnishing arguments for their right to communion. Will you say that the law of circumcision, covenant relation, membership in the church, the benediction of Christ, the holiness of children, the law of kindness, and their superior privileges under the gospel, all go to prove that all minors and servants of believers ought to be baptized, and yet deny that these same arguments afford any proof that any one of them ought to commune? The Jewish church admitted all her members to communion; but Pedobaptist churches admit only about half her members to the table of the Lord. How then can they, on their mode of reasoning, say that the gospel church has *enlarged* the privileges of her children above what they enjoyed under the former dispensation? And how can they consistently talk of open communion, while they refuse to communicate with perhaps more than half their *own* regular members?" "Let it be proved how their exclusion from the table of the Lord will not in any measure sink the gospel church below the Jewish church, and this argument will be just as good to prove that their exclusion from baptism will not diminish their religious privileges.

"If any one question the truth that little children were admitted to the passover, I would refer him to Exodus xii. 3, 4. 'They shall take to them every man a lamb according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house. And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating, shall make your count for the lamb.' " (Chapin.)

On this passage Mr. Scott has the following comment—"Every person in each household, including women and *children*, ate this first passover.—The women and children were not indeed *commanded* to go up to the tabernacle—but when they did, they joined in this sacred feast."

Says Witsius, also, "In those companies" (that partake of the passover) "men and women sat down together, old men and young, whole and sick, masters and servants, in fine,

every Jew that could eat a morsel of flesh, not excluding even young children." (See *Æcon. Fœd*, L. 4, Chap. 9th. § 14.)

Mr. Elder thinks he destroys this argument by a reference to Luke ii 41, 42, where it is said that our Saviour went with his parents to the Passover at twelve years of age, but this is far from being conclusive, for they may for ought that appears, have also taken him at an earlier age, or if the custom then was otherwise, it cannot contradict the evidence derived from Exodus xii. 3, 4. At the origin of the passover all whose physical ability enabled them, however youthful, appear to have partaken of it. So think Mr. Scott and Witsius, as we have seen, both of whom are *pedobaptist* witnesses.

III. That the view of historical evidence concerning infant baptism, given in the first part of this chapter, is not the misrepresentation of prejudice, but the true picture of the case which truth and candour require, must surely be admitted if learned and candid *pedobaptists* themselves have arrived at this conclusion. It is easy to understand how the judgments of not a few might be warped by attachment to system and party; if any therefore come to a conclusion concerning the testimony afforded by Ecclesiastical history, opposed to their own system, this can only be attributed to the force of truth.

The first witness of this sort whom we adduce is *Augustus Neander*, the present learned, and as it is said, pious Professor of Theology in the University of Berlin, perhaps the most celebrated Seminary at the present day in Germany. And in referring to modern testimony, it should be borne in mind, that the facilities for research, and the means of accuracy, are of course constantly increasing through the combined labours of learned men, which circumstance, where there is equal talent and industry, must stamp a high value on the opinion of modern students in matters of history or criticism. It may be well to introduce Prof. Neander's opinion with the following extract from a notice of him by Prof. Edw. Robinson of Andover, also a *pedobaptist*, taken from the *Biblical Repository*, No. ix. p. 69.

"Endued with great sagacity and a memory of prodigious power, and trained to habits of iron diligence, he has studied, to a greater extent and with larger results than any man now living, all the works of the fathers and other ancient writers, as also all the writings of the middle ages, which have any bearing upon either the external or internal history of the christian religion. He has entered into their very spirit, and made himself master of all their stores. These are points on which there is no question among the scholars of Germany, of

any sect or name. What Neander affirms upon any subject connected with such studies, comes with the weight of the highest authority ; because it is understood and known to be the result of minute personal investigation, united with entire candour and a perfect love of truth."

Neander's testimony is full and conclusive as respects both the subjects and mode of baptism, it is as follows, (Bib. Rep. No. xiv. p. 271.)

" In respect to the celebration of the two symbols of christian fellowship, baptism and the Lord's supper, the appointment of Christ himself was to be maintained and transmitted without change ; and the peculiar shaping of the christian life in connexion with the church among the heathen Christians, could not extend its transforming influence to them. We therefore recur in this respect to what has been already said above. In baptism the essential point was the entrance into fellowship with Christ, along with which consequently was included the being incorporated into Christ's spiritual body,—the being received into the fellowship of the redeemed, into the church of Christ. Baptism, therefore, in accordance with its characteristic feature, was to be a baptism into Christ, into the name of Christ ; and it can well be, that originally in the formula of baptism this alone was made prominent. The mode of immersion in baptism, which was practised among the Jews, passed over consequently to the heathen Christians also. This form was doubtless best adapted to express that which Christ intended to express by this symbol,—the merging of the whole man into a new spirit and life. Paul however takes occasion to employ also what was accidental in the form of the symbol,—the twofold action of submersion and emersion, to which Christ in the institution of the symbol assuredly had no regard. As Paul found in this an allusion both to Christ as dead and to Christ as risen, to both the negative and positive aspect of the christian life,—in following Christ a dying to all ungodliness, and in fellowship with him a rising again to a new and divine life,—he therefore made use here of what was accidental in the received form of baptism, in order thus allegorically to illustrate the idea and the object of baptism, in its connexion with the whole substance of Christianity.

" As now baptism signified an entrance into fellowship with Christ, it readily followed from the nature of the case, that a profession of faith in Jesus as the Redeemer should be made by the candidate at the time ; and in the latter part of the apostolic age, there are traces which point to the existence of such a custom.

“ Since baptism was thus immediately connected with a conscious and voluntary accession to the christian fellowship, and faith and baptism were always united, it is highly probable that baptism took place only in those cases where both could meet together, and that the custom of infant baptism was not practised in this age. From the examples of the baptism of whole families, we can by no means infer the existence of infant baptism. One passage shews the incorrectness of such an inference: for it thence appears, that the whole family of Stephanus, who all received baptism from Paul, was composed of adult members. Not only would the lateness of the time when the first distinct mention of infant baptism occurs, and the long continued opposition which was made to it, lead us to infer its non-apostolic origin; but it is also in itself not probable, that Paul, who was so urgent in making faith alone the foundation and fundamental condition of every thing christian, and who opposed himself so emphatically to every kind of *opus operatum*—that Paul should have introduced or permitted a custom, which might so easily have been the occasion of transferring to the right of baptism the illusion of a justification through external things, *sarkika*, against which, in its application to circumcision, the same apostle had ever so vehemently contended. The reasoning of Paul to the Corinthians seems also to imply, that the children of Christians were not yet incorporated into the church by baptism; but at the same time, this passage speaks of a sanctifying influence from the intercourse and fellowship existing between parents and children; through which influence the children of christian parents are distinguished from the children of parents not Christian, and in consequence of which they may in a certain sense be termed *hagia*, holy, in distinction from the *akatharta*, unholy, profane. Here now we find the IDEA out of which infant baptism must and did afterwards develope itself, and through which it is to be justified in the spirit of Paul; although on the grounds above mentioned, it is not probable that he himself, under THE RELATIONS in which he stood, actually introduced the custom.”

Professor Neander, is a pedobaptist of the Lutheran church and in some way or other, he must therefore hold to pedobaptism, which we here see he does, by supposing it to be the subsequent developement of an *idea* suggested by scripture. This is truly a slender hold, and in direct contradiction to his sentiments first quoted, namely, that in the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, “the appointment of Christ was to be maintained and transmitted *without change*.” Who can believe it possible that such a man as Neander, would fail to produce

a stronger support for his own practice than this, if a stronger were to be found either in history or the scriptures ?

To this testimony we add the following :—" Bishop BURNET. ' There is no express precept or rule given in the New Testament for baptism of infants.' " *Expos. of Articles* Art. xxvii.

" LUTHER. ' It cannot be proved by the sacred Scriptures, that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first christians AFTER the apostles.' " *Pæd. Exam.* v. ii. p. 4.

" CURCELLÆUS, (a learned divine of Geneva, and Professor of Divinity.) ' The baptism of infants in the two first centuries after Christ was altogether unknown ; but in the third and fourth was allowed by some few. In the fifth and following ages it was generally received.—The custom of baptizing infants did not begin before the third age after Christ was born. In the former ages no trace of it appears—and it was introduced without the command of Christ.' " *In Pæd. Exam.* v. ii. p. 76.

" SALMASIUS and SUICERUS. ' In the two first centuries no one was baptized, except, being instructed in the faith, and acquainted with the doctrine of Christ, he was able to profess himself a believer ; because of those words, *He that believeth and is baptized.*' " *Ut Supra.*

" RIGALTIIUS, '(whom Dr. Fell, bishop of Oxford, and Dr. Wall, granted to be a man of great learning.)' ' In the Acts of the Apostles, we read that *both men and women were baptized*—without any mention being made of infants. From the apostolic age, therefore, to the time of Tertullian, the matter continued doubtful. And there were some who on occasion of our Lord's saying, *Suffer little children to come unto me*, (though he gave no order to baptize them) did baptize even new-born infants ; and as if they were transacting some secular bargain with God Almighty, brought sponsors and bondsmen to be bound for them, that when they were grown up, they should not depart from the christian faith.' " *In Dr. Wall's Hist. of Inf. Bap.* v. ii. p. 14, & *Pæd. Exam.* v. ii. p. 78.

Mr. BAXTER, though zealous for the cause of Pedobaptism allows, " That, in the days of Tertullian, Nazianzen, and Austin, men had liberty to be baptized, or to bring their children, when and at what age they pleased ; and none were forced to go against their consciences therein." And in another place he makes this acknowledgement, " Yet again I will confess that the words of Tertullian and Nazianzen, shew that it was long before all were agreed of the very time, or of the necessity of baptizing infants before any use of reason, in case they were like to live to maturity." (*Wall, v. ii. 30. i. 77.*)

Such is the evidence of Pedobaptists themselves against their own practice. In opposition to these Mr. Elder has adduced a list of *Pedobaptists* of the contrary opinion. Our readers we conceive must for the most part anticipate our reply. In the *first* place we say that the manner in which they are cited is sufficient to invalidate their testimony, for he not only gives no references to the pages of the authors quoted, but not even the page of Pond from whom he tells us he takes them. *Secondly*,—It is surely not extraordinary that *pedobaptist* authors may be accumulated in *favour* of pedobaptist principles, it would be strange if they could not, but what does such testimony weigh against such as we have now adduced, the *concessions* of learned pedobaptists themselves, which truth and candour have wrung from them *against* their own practice? *Thirdly*,—They prove altogether too much, for Augustine, as we shew hereafter, is as good a witness for infant *communion* as infant *baptism*; and Mr. Elder makes Calvin say "there is no writer so ancient, that doth not certainly refer the beginning thereof [of infant baptism] to the age of the apostles;" and some man of the name of Brown, for we are not told who he is, is adduced as saying "None can without the most affronted imposition, allege that infant baptism was not commonly allowed in the primitive ages of Christianity." Let our readers answer what could possibly induce such men as the learned Professor Neander, Bishop Burnet, Luther, Curcellaeus, Rigaltius, the pious Richard Baxter, and the others we have named, *all pedobaptists*, to be guilty of the "*affronted imposition*," of making the statements we have quoted? Who can believe that they whose prejudices must all have been in favour of the opposite opinion, and who had equal opportunity with others to ascertain the fact, could possibly have made the statements we have cited, if they had not found that the usually quoted proofs of the early practice of infant baptism all crumble under the pressure of a thorough examination?

From the investigation now made, it plainly appears that what Mr. Elder says (page 41,) about the early and general prevalence of infant baptism is mere vamping. An early practice comparatively we admit it to have been; but one which had not even partially begun until at least two hundred years had opened the sluice gates of corruption, through which entered not merely infant *baptism* but infant *communion* also, and a countless multitude of other errors.

PART SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM SHEWN FROM SCRIPTURAL EXAMPLES,
THE USE OF THE WORD BAPTIZE, AND ALLUSIONS TO
THE ORDINANCE.

We come now, in the second place, to the *mode* of baptism. The English version of the Bible has in fact left the word *baptize* untranslated ; still enough appears even in the translation to satisfy the most unlettered inquirer that *baptize* must mean *immerse* or *plunge*. To shew this, we shall first adduce as in the former branch of our inquiry, *all* the passages in the New Testament in which baptism is mentioned or alluded to, that can serve to explain the mode of its administration, arranging them under the following heads :—

First, The circumstances attending baptism.

Matt. iii. 5. " And there went out to him Jerusalem, and
" all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan. 6. And
" were baptized of him [John] in Jordan confessing their sins.
" (Mark i. 5.) — And were all baptized of him in the river
" Jordan confessing their sins. 9. And — Jesus — was
" baptized of John in Jordan. 10. And straightway COMING
" UP OUT OF THE WATER, he saw the heavens opened, and the
" spirit like a dove descending upon him. 11. And there came
" a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in
" whom I am well pleased. (Matt. iii. 16.) And Jesus, when
" he was baptized, WENT UP straightway OUT OF THE WATER :
" and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the
" spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him;
" 17. And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved
" Son, in whom I am well pleased. (Luke iii. 21.) — Jesus

“ also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,
 “ &c. (Acts viii. 38.) And he [the Ethiopian eunuch] com-
 “ manded the chariot to stand still : and they WENT DOWN both
 “ INTO the water, both Philip and the eunuch ; and he bapti-
 “ zed him. 39. And when they were COME UP OUT of the water,
 “ the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, &c.”

It is impossible to read the above passages, without feel-
 ing assured that the ceremony which was performed in the river
 Jordan; to perform which the parties interested went *down into*
 the water; and after which, they are represented as coming *up*
out of the water, could be nothing less than bathing or immer-
 sing the whole person. They surely did not thus descend into
 the water for the purpose merely of sprinkling or moistening a
 part of the person with a few drops of water ! Some pedobap-
 tists indeed have laboured to shew that agreeably to the Greek
 idiom, in Jordan *might mean at Jordan*, and that going *down*
into the water, and coming *up out of the water*, *might mean ap-*
proaching to, and coming away from the edge of the water.—
 But the common sense of the unprejudiced reader will inform
 him that it is hardly to be believed that the translators of the
 English version of the Bible, who were all *pedobaptists*, would
 have rendered these passages in a manner so unfavourable to
 their own system, if the idiom of the language, from which
 they were translating, did not imperiously demand it. Besides,
 if the fact is known to be, as we shall shew hereafter by the
 most incontestable evidence, that the practice of the first ages
 was to immerse, it is impossible to read the above history with-
 out feeling assured that the action named *was a going down*
into, and a coming up out of, the water, and that, for the pur-
 pose of immersion. This conviction receives strength from the
 following passage :

John iii. 23. “ John also was baptizing in Ænon, near to
 “ Salim, BECAUSE there was MUCH WATER there: and they came,
 “ and were baptized.”

Here the quantity of water in Ænon is mentioned as the
reason of John's baptizing there. But, how small a quantity
 would be sufficient to baptize a great multitude by sprinkling,
 or moistening, or even pouring, let the reader judge.

Secondly, The use of the word baptize in other cases.

Matt. iii. 11. “ I indeed baptize you with water unto re-
 “ pentance : but he that cometh after me is mightier than I,
 “ whose shoes I am not worthy to bear : he shall baptize you
 “ with the Holy Ghost, and *with fire*. 12. Whose fan is in his

"hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Here, it will not be denied, that the Greek preposition *en*, rendered by our translators *with*, in the expressions "with water," "with the Holy Ghost" and "with fire" is the same as occurs in the passages in Matt. iii. 5, and Mark i. 5, which the same translators have there rendered "in Jordan" and "in the river of Jordan." It ought therefore to be translated *in* and not *with*, in the above passages also. It was impossible to say, the people were baptized *with* the River; truth and candour prevailed to prevent the translators rendering the former passage, "at Jordan;" to have translated the present passage "at water," "at fire," "at the Holy Ghost," would be as absurd as to say *with* Jordan; wherefore, some one expression ought to be adopted in this case that will make sense with the word baptize in all these places. The only word that can thus harmonize the passages is the English preposition *in*, which properly answers to the Greek *en*. * That this is the correct translation may be seen, even by the unlearned reader, by considering the force of the passage now before us.

The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the abundant outpouring of spiritual gifts both external and inward, ordinary and

* "VENEMA. 'It is without controversy, that baptism, in the primitive church, was administered by immersion into water, and not by sprinkling, seeing John is said to have baptized *IN Jordan*, and where there was much water.'"

Hist. Eccles. Secul. i. § 138. Pæd. Exam. v. i. p. 212.

"Mr. HERVEY, when commending that *en* signifies *in*, adds, 'I can prove it to have been in peaceable possession of this signification for more than two thousand years. Every one knows,' he observes in another place, 'that *with* is not the native, obvious, and literal meaning; rather a meaning swayed, influenced, moulded by the preceding or following word.'"*Letters to Mr. Wesley, Let. ii. & x.*

"In four of the first versions of the Bible into English, we find these words rendered literally 'in water;' but the expression not suiting the prevailing custom, it was afterwards rendered *with water*, it is *in*, in the Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic and several more modern versions—Vide *Pæd. Exam. v. i. p. 108.*"

"Dr. CAMPBELL. 'In water—*en hudati*—Nothing can be plainer than that, if there be any incongruity, in the expression *in water*, this, *in Jordan*, must be equally incongruous.'"*Note in loc.*

"LENFANT. 'In the water—in the Holy Ghost. These words do very well express the ceremony of Baptism, which was at first performed by plunging the whole body into water, as also the copious effusion of the Holy Ghost, on the day of Pentecost.'"

In Pæd. Exam. v. i. p. 191.

extraordinary, which commenced on the day of Pentecost, and so gloriously distinguished the first age of the church. Now the copious bestowment of these gifts, by the abundance and glory of which, the Christian dispensation was so much more highly honored than the Jewish, is well expressed by the idea of a complete bathing or immersion of the whole person, but in no other way; on the contrary an idea the reverse of this, an idea of a very spare and scanty gift would be communicated by the words *sprinkle* or *moisten*. How would it sound to say "he will *sprinkle* or *moisten* you with the Holy Ghost and with fire?"

Moreover, the passage in Acts ii. 2, where the first bestowment of these spiritual gifts is described, represents the disciples as literally immersed in the rushing mighty wind which was the outward symbol of the inward grace then given, for it "filled all the house where they were sitting." It matters not in what manner this wind entered, or whether we say it was poured upon them or not, the *result* was that they were immersed in it, and when this event took place they were in that condition both of soul and body, which John foretold when he said of Christ, "he shall *baptize* you with the Holy Ghost." The fact then concurs with what we naturally suppose the meaning of the word baptize must be, when it is used to designate the bestowment of abundant spiritual gifts. Some indeed may think that this idea is sufficiently expressed by the word pouring; but would it be so unless a complete immersion were the consequence? If we say that God will pour blessings on any one the idea intended is that such an one shall be *covered* or *surrounded* with blessings, not merely touched with them.

Again, the expression in the above quotation, "he shall baptize you with fire," leads to the same result. It has by some been thought that baptized with fire, in this passage, refers to the tongues of fire which rested on the heads of the disciples on the day of Pentecost, and in this case, the idea of baptizing, is fulfilled by the rushing mighty wind in which the disciples became immersed, but *not* by the fire, according to a figure called *Zeugma* very common in both the Greek and Hebrew scriptures, in which a verb, as baptize in the present case, is used in connection with two subjects, only one of which can relate to the action of the verb. An instance of this is found in Job iv. 10. "The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and the teeth of the young lions are broken;" it is evident the action of breaking can only refer to the last subject in the sentence, the teeth of the young lion, and not to the two former, the roaring or the voice. This was the inter-

pretation once adopted by the author of these pages, but a more minute examination of the passages in which the above expression occurs, has led him, as it must, we believe, every careful reader of the scriptures, to a different result. The expression "baptize with fire" occurs only in Matt. iii. 11. and Luke iii. 16. and in both of these the context both before and after connects with it the punishment of the wicked. Mark who in speaking of the baptism of the Holy Ghost omits the words "and with fire," omits also in the same connection to mention the punishment of the wicked. These considerations compel us to think that baptism with the Holy Ghost refers to the abundant bestowment of spiritual gifts, by which those who obtained them, were plunged or immersed, as it were, in these divine gifts; and that baptism with fire refers to the punishment of the wicked, who would be immersed or overwhelmed in fire. It is evident that the idea thus explained can only be fully expressed by rendering *baptize*, by the word *immerse* or *plunge*, or some word of like meaning, and *with*, by the word *in*. "I indeed immerse you in water — he shall immerse you in the Holy Ghost and in fire." The same idea evidently belongs to the word baptize in the following passages:

Matt. xx. 22. "But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? (Luke xii. 50.) But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"

This is a figurative use of the word like the last, but the idea is equally that of plunging or immersion. The Saviour here speaks of his sufferings, which he represents under the image of a baptism, but where is the propriety of such an image if baptism does not signify immersion plunging or something of that sort? The Saviour was not sprinkled, or moistened, or washed in sufferings, but plunged in them as in a sea.*

Thirdly, Allusions to the mode of baptism.

1. Cor. x. 1. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2. And were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea."

* "DR. DODDRIDGE thus paraphrases the place: 'Are you able to drink of the bitter cup of which I am now about to drink so deep, and to be baptized with the baptism, and plunged into that sea of sufferings with which I am shortly to be baptized, and, as it were, overwhelmed for a time?'" Paraphrase on Matt. xx. 22.

See also his Paraphrase on Luke xiii. 50.

In this passage and its context the apostle is tracing a resemblance between the condition of the Israelites in the wilderness and that of Christians, in order to introduce his warning to the converts at Corinth, not to resemble ancient Israel in their unbelief. As Christians in baptism "submit themselves avowedly to Christ, so the Israelites" submitted themselves to the special authority and guidance of Moses, of which their passage of the Red Sea, as a sort of figurative baptism, was a pledge. Obviously the apostle is not intending to trace a literal resemblance between baptism and the passage of the Red Sea, all that can be sought for in accordance with the rules of just criticism, is so much resemblance as to justify the allusion. That resemblance is well pointed out by the following pedobaptist commentators.

"WIRSIUS expounds the place to this effect. 'How were the Israelites baptized in the cloud and in the sea, seeing they were neither immersed in the sea, nor wetted by the cloud? It is to be considered, that the apostle here used the term 'baptism' in a figurative sense;—yet there is some agreement to the external sign. The sea is water, and a cloud differs but little from water. The cloud hung over their heads, and the sea surrounded them on each side; and so the water in regard to those that are baptized.'" *Oecon. Fœd. Lib. iv. chap. x. § 11.*

"DR. WHITBY. 'They were covered with the sea on both sides, Ex. xiv. 22, so that both the cloud and the sea had some resemblance to our being covered with water in baptism.—Their going into the sea resembled the ancient rite of going into the water; and their coming out of it, their rising up out of the water.'" *In Pœd. Exam. vol. i. p. 187, 188.*

"MR. GATAKER. 'As in the Christian rite, when persons are baptized, they are overwhelmed, and, as it were, buried in water—and again, when they emerge, they rise as out of a sepulchre—so the Israelites might seem when passing through the waters of the sea that were higher than their heads, to be overwhelmed, and, as it were, buried, and again to emerge and arise when they escaped to the opposite shore.'" *Ut Supra.*

To these we add, as tending to remove a common objection, the following quotation from Prof. STUART, of Andover, (a pedobaptist,) "The suggestion has sometimes been made, that the Israelites were sprinkled by the cloud and by the sea, and this was the baptism which Paul meant to designate. But the cloud on this occasion was not a cloud of rain, nor do we find any intimation that the waters of the Red Sea sprinkled the children of Israel at this time."—*Biblical Rep. No. x. p. 336.*

1. Pet. iii. 20. "The long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls, were saved by water. 21. The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

The latter part of this verse has already been commented on, (see page 20 of this treatise.) The resemblance traced between baptism and the saving of Noah and his family by the flood, is like the last instance merely figurative. Noah and his family were saved by water as an instrument in the hand of God. Christians are saved by baptism as a sign of the hand or power of God exerted on their hearts. Not that the outward sign really saves but is significant of the good conscience towards God, which the Holy Spirit creates within.

In addition to the above might be quoted such passages as Eph. v. 26. that he might cleanse it with the *washing* of water; Titus iii. 5, by the *washing* of regeneration; Heb. x. 22, having — our bodies *washed* with pure water; but as washing is an effect of immersion, it is plain that all these passages may refer to that mode as well as any other. "Besides the Greek word employed in these passages is the word which rather designates *bathing*, washing of the person or body, than a partial washing, as of the hands, or feet, or face."—(Ripley, 102.)

Rom. vi. 3. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. (Colos. ii. 11.) In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: 12. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."

We shall not enter into any lengthened exposition of these passages. Almost all critics of any celebrity have admitted that in both of them there is an evident allusion to the original mode of baptism by immersing or burying the body in water. Such will be the natural impression, too, of most readers of plain understanding. It may be satisfactory however, for the

purpose of evolving the whole meaning of these passages, to give the following paraphrases and comments, taken from a recent learned treatise on baptism.* Rom. vi. "Do ye not know that so many of us as have been baptized into an acknowledgement of Jesus Christ, were baptized into an acknowledgement of his death, or have by our baptism engaged to die unto sin, as he died for sin? By baptism, then, which acknowledges his death, we have been buried, as he was buried; that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, so we also having been raised up from our burial, should lead a new life." Col. ii. 'By whom ye have been circumcised with an internal circumcision, namely, the laying aside of carnal propensities, by the circumcision which Christ enjoins, having, as an indication of this, been buried in baptism as he was buried; wherein also [in which rite] ye have through faith in the power of God, or through belief of the power of God, who raised him from the dead, been raised up as he was raised up.' This passage and the similar one in the Epistle to the Romans, very beautifully harmonize, and unite in shewing an internal death to sin experienced by believers, and an outward emblematical burial which indicates their faith in the power of God, as manifested in the resurrection of Christ from the dead."

That Professor Ripley's paraphrase of these passages concurs with most *pedobaptist* critics of celebrity will appear from the following quotations:

"DR. WALL. (Vicar of Shoreham, in Kent, and author of that famous work, 'the History of Infant Baptism,' for which he received the thanks of the whole clergy in convocation.) 'As to the manner of baptism then generally used, the texts produced by every one that speaks of these matters, John iii. 23, Mark i. 5, Acts viii. 38, are undeniable proofs that the baptized person went ordinarily into the water, and sometimes the Baptist too. We should not know from these accounts whether the whole body of the baptized was put under water, head and all, were it not for two later proofs, which seem to me to PUT IT OUT OF QUESTION. One, That St. Paul does twice, in an allusive way of speaking, call baptism a BURIAL. The other, The custom of the christians in the near succeeding times, which being more largely and particularly delivered in books, is known to have been generally or ordinarily, a TOTAL IMMERSION.'"

Defence of the Hist. of Inf. Bap. p. 131.

* Christian Baptism by Professor Ripley, of Newton.

“Archbishop TILLOTSON. ‘Anciently, those who were baptized were immersed and BURIED in the water, to represent their death to sin; and then did rise up out the water, to signify their entrance upon a new life. And to these customs the apostle alludes, Rom. vi. 2—6.’”

Works, vol. 1. Serm. vii. p. 179.

“Archbishop SECKER. ‘BURYING, as it were, the person baptized in the water, and raising him out again, WITHOUT QUESTION, was anciently the more usual method: on account of which, St. Paul speaks of baptism as representing both the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and what is grounded on them—our being dead and buried to sin, and our rising again to walk in newness of life.’” *Lect. on Gal. L. xxxv.*

“Dr. SAM. CLARKE. ‘We are buried with Christ by baptism, &c. In the primitive times the manner of baptizing was by immersion, or dipping the whole body into the water. And this manner of doing it was a very significant emblem of the dying and rising again, referred to by St. Paul in the above mentioned similitude.’”

Expos. of Church Catechism, p. 294, ed. 6.

“Dr. WELLS. ‘St. Paul here alludes to immersion, or dipping the whole body under water in baptism; which he intimates did typify the death and burial (of the person baptized) to sin, and his rising up out of the water did typify his resurrection to newness of life.’” *Illust. Bib. on Rom. vi. 4.*

“Dr. DODDRIDGE (in whose words we have Mr. JOHN WESLEY, and Mr. GEORGE WHITEFIELD; the former in a *Note*, and the latter in a *Sermon*, on the verse.) ‘Buried with him in baptism. It seems the part of candour to confess, that there is an allusion to the manner of baptizing by immersion.’”

Fam. Expos. Note on the place.

“ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES. ‘If we have been planted together: By this elegant similitude the apostle represents to us, that, as a plant that is set in the earth lieth as dead and immoveable for a time, but after springs up and flourishes, so Christ’s body lay dead for a while in the grave, but sprung up and flourished in his resurrection; and we also, when we are baptized, are buried, as it were, in water for a time, but after are raised up to newness of life.’”

Annot. in loc.

“Dr. MACKNIGHT. ‘Planted together in the likeness of his death. The burying of Christ, and of believers first in the water of baptism, and afterwards in the earth, is fitly enough compared to the planting of seeds in the earth, because the effect in both cases, is a reviviscence to a state of greater perfection.’”

Note on Rom. vi. 5.

"Dr. TOWERSON, speaking of 'Plunging the party baptized,' adds, it is 'A signification which St. Paul will not suffer those to forget, who have been acquainted with his Epistles. For, with reference to that manner of baptizing, we find him affirming, (Rom. vi. 4.) that we are '*buried with Christ by baptism,*' &c. And again, (ver. 5) that, '*if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.*' "

Of the Sacra. of Bap. Part iii. p. 51.

"Such, too, was the conviction of Luther, in view of this passage, who after speaking of baptism as a symbol of death and resurrection, says, 'On this account I could wish that such as are to be baptized, should be completely immersed into water, according to the meaning of the word, and the signification of the ordinance; not because I think it necessary, but because it would be beautiful to have a full and perfect sign of so perfect and full a thing; *as also without doubt it was instituted by Christ.*' See his work entitled *Captivitas Babylonica*, in the collection *Omni. Oper. M. LUTHER.* Tom. ii. p. 76. ed. 1551."

These passages taken from the Scripture Guide, and compared also with Booth's Pedob. Exam. render perfectly conclusive the evidence derived from those that precede them, as to the mode of baptism. It was difficult, if not impossible, to believe that the circumstances of going down into and coming up out of the water, of seeking a place for baptism where abundance of water was found as at Enon, or the figurative representation of Christ's sufferings as a baptism could have occurred unless the word *baptize* meant *immerse* or something akin to this; but if there were any doubt remaining from the previous examination, the last quoted passages have entirely removed it: they shew the external ordinance to be in its form a burial in water and a rising from it, designed to be symbolical of the spiritual change, the death unto sin, and the rising to newness of life, which those who are baptized ought to possess.

CHAPTER II.

ALLEGED IMPROBABILITIES CONSIDERED.

Against the evidence now produced it is common to allege certain cases of baptism in the scriptures, the circumstances attending which, as pedobaptists think, render it improbable that immersion was the method employed in those cases. It would

be sufficient to reply to this objection that *improbabilities* will not weigh against the scriptural evidence already produced ; that which may appear improbable, may nevertheless be very possible, it may be only our ignorance which makes it appear improbable. It might at first appear *improbable* that the Jailor at Philippi should be baptized by immersion in or near the prison which he kept. Still, if we know that the Saviour has appointed the mode of immersion as symbolical of a spiritual death and resurrection, we then feel that the Jailor *must* have been immersed, though we cannot tell where they found water ; until by and bye, perhaps, evidence of the frequent use of baths by both the ancients and moderns in the East, even in prisons, may shew us, that it appeared improbable to us that the Jailor was immersed, only because we were unacquainted with this custom.

We do not, however, wish to *erase* the objection, and shall therefore proceed to examine such of these cases of alleged improbability as occur in Mr. Elder's Letter IX. page 72, &c. The first is *the baptism of the 3000 on the day of Pentecost*.—Of this instance Mr. Elder is bold enough to assert as follows: " It is impossible " he informs us " for any person to point out any probable way by which it could be administered by immersion. The place twenty miles distant from Jordan or Ænon or any other place that is known that would be suitable for immersion : the number baptized 3000 : the time only a part of the day after the preaching ; all unpremeditated so that there could have been no place provided before hand. The candidates also unprovided with any change of clothes : the number authorised to administer baptism no more as we have reason to think than the twelve apostles."

There is an extravagance in this representation, which, the writer of these pages is constrained to say, he is grieved to see. Strongly indisposed by nature, if he knows himself, to suspect others of insincerity, he fully anticipated something in Mr. Elder's apology for his change of principle, which should give evidence of a mind yielding obedience, however unwillingly, to some *new* and *specious* form of the argument for infant baptism, which, although erroneous, had assumed to him the appearance of truth. A mind ever open to inquiry and conviction is sometimes exposed to hesitation about many subjects ; but in such case, if that which was at first hesitation, becomes at last a settled change of opinion or belief, one expects, of course, to see the *new* form of argument clearly stated as *the reason* of the change, and the *fallacy* of *old* arguments exposed ; but of how different a character is the statement before us ; it

resembles, we are sorry to say it, the declamation of a partizan, far more than the sober and quiet conviction of reason.

The first difficulty, thus conjured up, is the want of water in the ancient city of Jerusalem ! " The place " cries Mr. Elder, " twenty miles distant from Jordan or Ænon or any other place that is known that would be suitable for immersion ! " Had Mr. Elder never heard, then, of the Pools of Siloam and Bethesda, or of the multitude of baths private as well as public which the constant ablution of the Mosiac ritual made necessary ? Yes, he knew of these, for, in his former publication he tells us (page 33), " There was the pool of Bethesda and that of Siloam, where persons bathed and dipped themselves on certain occasions ; " is it then quite honest for Mr. Elder now to pass these pools by without any notice ? " We must also remember " he continues in his former letters " that the Jews were in constant practice of immersing themselves on religious accounts, and therefore would have many conveniences for that purpose in so large a city as Jerusalem ; " and yet Mr. Elder can now find it in his conscience to assert, that Jerusalem was " twenty miles distant from any place that is known that would be suitable for immersion ! " The next objection is the great multitude of converts. " The number baptized 3000," exclaims Mr. Elder, and for the purpose of propping this objection he informs us (page 73) that there is " no reason from scripture to conclude that any but the twelve apostles " baptized " on the day of Pentecost. " How wild an assertion is this ! Surely there is no reason from scripture to conclude the contrary ; that none but the apostles baptized ; this is no where stated in the New Testament. Why should we not suppose that the seventy disciples, whom the Saviour had sent out to preach, also administered the ordinance of baptism ? They went out two and two, and is it not highly probable that they baptized those who believed through their preaching ? We have in fact full as much evidence that they baptized as that the apostles did. These disciples, or many of them, were, doubtless, among the one hundred and twenty assembled on the present occasion, and these may therefore have assisted in the baptism ; besides, if the aid of others was needed, it surely is not unlikely that an extraordinary appointment would be made to meet the exigencies of this extraordinary occasion.— But the time is too short in Mr. Elder's opinion, " only a part of the day after the preaching ! " Now, let us call in the aid of a little calculation, and see what becomes of this objection. The seventy disciples and twelve apostles make eighty two administrators ; the 3000 divided among these make little more

than *thirty five* to each ; now, Mr. Elder himself, in his former publication, informs us of a Mr. Merill, of Sedgwick, who baptized 66 persons in 40 minutes, and it is commonly known among baptists that this rate is by no means of rare occurrence ; the 35, then, on the present occasion, might certainly be baptized in 30 minutes. But some time would be occupied by Peter's discourse, which commenced at the third hour of the day, that is 9 o'clock in the morning ; and after his discourse was finished some further time would be required to ascertain who the persons were amidst the great multitude in attendance, that "gladly received the word ;" and for the candidates for baptism to make the necessary preparations for the ordinance, and to repair to the respective baths or other places where it may have been performed : let us then allow *six hours* for this, from the time Peter began speaking, and 30 minutes for the baptism itself, and the whole ceremony would be completed by *half past three in the afternoon*, thus leaving a large part of the day *unengaged !*

It may be added, that there is nothing impossible in the account of this baptism, although we should suppose the administration of it to have been confined to the twelve apostles ; for, the 3000, divided among the twelve, would be 250 to each ; these at the rate of 66 in 40 minutes would be baptized in about two hours and a half—let us double the time and say five hours—this commencing at three o'clock would bring it to eight o'clock only ; and if more time was needed what should hinder the ceremony being continued in that fine climate, in some of the spacious public or private baths, or even in the open air by the light either of the moon or of torches, until a late hour. We have in Acts one instance of the warm affections of Christians keeping them engaged in listening to the preaching of Paul, all night until morning.

But another difficulty is that "the candidates were unprovided with any change of clothes !" And is it impossible to conceive of their going each to their homes to make the necessary preparations ? Was this an *insuperable* difficulty ? But then, in page 73, it is added, "there is not the smallest intimation that they ever went from the spot to be baptized." Is Mr. Elder then, so ignorant of the language of narration, as not to know that every minute particular is seldom if ever mentioned in any history, and that this is especially the character of scripture narrative ? A considerable quantity of water would be required to *sprinkle* 3000 persons, yet no mention is made of its being brought ! Who does not know, that when any *principal* fact is mentioned, the mind is often left to supply

the subordinate and less important matters that relate to it ? What then becomes of Mr. Elder's loud declamation, and of the bold assertion (page 72,) " that it is utterly impossible for any person to point out any *probable* way by which [baptism on this occasion] could have been administered by immersion ?" It is a pity that such a statement ever appeared, or that such arguments were ever used to sustain it. Childish objections like these may be tolerated in those who have *always* been under the prejudices incident to a particular system ; but they are objections which only need to be exposed in order to appear ridiculous ; and when a man has himself exposed their absurdity, as Mr. Elder has done in his former letters, it wounds his reputation to see him reviving all the stale trifling which he had himself laid to rest.

As the customs of the East and the frequent use of the bath may not be generally known, we subjoin the following testimony on this point. *Prof. Jahn*, of Vienna, *Biblical Archæology*, translated by Upham. § 180. " The bath was always very agreeable to the inhabitants of the East." It " is frequently used by Eastern ladies, and may be reckoned among their principal recreations." " It was one of the civil laws of the Hebrews that the bath should be used. The object of the law without doubt was to secure a proper degree of cleanliness among them. Lev. 14: 2. 15: 1—8. 17: 15, 16. 22: 6. Num. 19: 6. We may, therefore, consider it as *probable*, that *public baths*, soon after the enactment of this law were created in Palestine, of a construction similar to that of those, which are so frequently seen at the present day in the East."

Rees' Cyclopædia, Article Baths. " The people of the East were ever accustomed to bathing, and have continued the habit to the present time ; their methods being perfectly conformable to those of the Greeks and Romans." Amongst a number of ancient baths there described we select the following account of the baths of Caracalla. " The room in which the bath was placed, was thirty one feet in length, by fifteen feet three inches wide ; the bason was of masonry, with a border of large stones extending eighteen inches from the edge of the hollow. The cavity between the sides was twelve feet wide by fifteen long. It was descended to in front by seven or eight steps extending the width of the bath ; four above the brink, and three or four went to the bottom of the bason : and the whole was lighted by a small opening at the top."

The same. Article Bathing. " Among the Turks, bathing forms a part of diet and luxury ; and in every town and even village there is a public bath, for those who have not

the convenience of private baths attached to their houses."—The description of one of these baths, from Baron de Tott, shews them to be both "sweating and ordinary baths united." Again, "Baths similar to that above described, though differing in size are constructed in all the principal towns in Egypt. The necessity of cleanliness in the eastern climates, where perspiration is so copious, has rendered baths indispensable."

"It has been suggested that there *might* have been tanks," says Mr. Elder. Why does he not avow the known fact of the frequent large cisterns or pools in Jerusalem? The following references will shew that it was no questionable matter.

Kuinoel, on John v. 2. "There were formerly many pools [*piscinæ*] at Jerusalem, and at this day they are found there, see Pococke, *Th. 2. p. 16.*" *Ib.* "Josephus mentions also a pool situated to the North of the temple, and at this day the pool Bethesda, although dried up, is shewn to the North of the temple, contiguous to the court of the temple, and the gate of Stephen, sufficient arguments however are wanting to prove that this pool is the same mentioned in John v. 2."

Horne's *Introduction*, vol. iii. p. 41. Speaking of Siloam, he says, "The pool or rather the two pools of the same name, are quite close to the spring. They are still used for washing linen as formerly."

Robinson's *Greek and English Lexicon*, from Wahl. Article Siloam. "Its waters were anciently conducted into two large reservoirs or pools, of which the *upper* (Is. 7: 3.) or king's pool (Neh. 2: 14.) and which Josephus calls the pool of Solomon, (B. J. V. 4. 2.) probably watered the King's gardens, which were in the vicinity, (Neh. 3: 15.) while the *lower* (Is. 22: 9.) was probably designed for the use of the inhabitants."

The following extracts, promiscuously taken from Josephus, will shew how constantly attentive to provide water, and bathing places, the Jews appear to have been. *Antiq. B. xv. ciii. 3.* He is giving an account of the drowning of Aristobulus at Jericho by Herod; "And as they stood by the fish ponds [*colymbethras*], of which there were large ones about the house, they went to cool themselves [by bathing] because it was in the midst of a hot day. At first they were only spectators of Herod's servants and acquaintance as they were swimming; but after a while, the young man, at the instigation of Herod, went into the water among them, while such of Herod's acquaintance as he had appointed to do it, dipped him, as he was swimming, and plunged him under water — till he was entirely suffocated."

Jewish War, B. V. C. iv. 3. Describing the tower Hippicus, built by Herod at Jerusalem, he says, "Over this solid building, which was composed of great stones united together, there was a *reservoir* twenty cubits deep." And describing the tower Phasaelus, also built there by Herod, he says, "There was also built over that cloister another tower, parted into magnificent rooms, and a place for bathing."

Professor Stuart, of Andover, Bib. Rep. x. p. 333. "We must conclude, then, that if baptism by immersion was practised on this occasion, it must have been in baths or washing places. I do not say this is impossible, for every one acquainted with the Jewish rites must know, that they made much use of ablutions; and therefore they would provide many conveniences for them."

Nay, Mr. Elder himself in his former letters on baptism, makes the following quotation from Bishop Patrick, (Com. on Lev. 15. 12.) "There are so many washings prescribed (in the Law of Moses) that it is reasonable to believe that there were not only at Jerusalem, and in all other cities; but in every village, several bathing places, contrived for their legal purifications, that men might without much labour, be able to fulfil these precepts."

These references are abundantly sufficient to shew, that Jerusalem must have been extensively supplied with baths.—Bathing, in fact, is so constantly enjoined in the Mosaic law, that it is impossible to believe but that so rich and ancient a city; at the period to which we now refer, would be provided with conveniences of every description that could facilitate a compliance with the religious rites of the people; and constant and free as must have been the resort to these, there is no reason to suppose that any obstacle would have been made to the use of them for baptism on the present occasion. Besides, among 3000 persons, though many of them were strangers at Jerusalem, it is most likely there were not a few, who either possessed private baths themselves, or who had friends who owned them, where baptism might be performed without difficulty.—When all these considerations are regarded, it is quite unnecessary to suppose, that a resort was made on this occasion for the purpose of baptism, to the brazen sea or any sacred place.—The most probable resort was perhaps to public and private baths. Indeed the pool of Bethesda is supposed by commentators to have been a public bath. And from the account in John v. 2. it must have been a very large one. It was surrounded it appears by five porticoes in which "lay a multitude of impotent folk;" and to those the use of the pool appears to have

been free, for the difficulty of the lame man, healed there by the Saviour, was not that he had no money to pay for being admitted, but no man to "put [him] into the pool." It may be observed that the word *colymbethra* translated pool, is derived from *colymao*, to swim, and is analogous to the Latin *piscina*, which appears always to mean a cistern larger than an ordinary bath, such a pool as *one might swim in*. It is plain from the account of Bethesda, that there is no reason to suppose that any sacredness attached to it that would prevent the freest possible use of it. In fact, baptism though practised by Christians, must have borne so near a resemblance to the ceremonial bathings of the Jews, that we cannot suppose they would have shrunk from the ordinance as a profanation; ceremonial bathing with them was so frequent that people must have been resorting to the bath every day, and almost every hour.

The next case, on which Mr. Elder comments, is that in Acts vi. 4. where it is recorded that 5000 at Jerusalem believed: and "here" he tells us "all the difficulties in the way of baptism by immersion would have to be accounted for again and again." Why so? we ask, having been once explained and shewn to be only *imaginary* difficulties, is not that a sufficient explanation for every similar case. To us, it appears, that the difficulties, instead of being increased, are lessened by this great increase of the church at Jerusalem. There were 3000 the first day, and now 5000, besides the daily additions, mentioned Acts ii. 47. so that, in a few days, there were upwards of 8000 members of that church; if so great a body of people could contrive no way of immersion, in a city abounding doubtless with public and private baths of ample size, it is an extraordinary circumstance!

Again, Mr. Elder tells us, that there is nothing in the accounts of the baptisms of individuals or families, "that would lead us to suppose, that these baptisms were performed by immersion, except the case of the Ethiopian eunuch." How weak is this sort of remark! Who does not see, that if the circumstances attending each specific baptism are such as to *cast no light* on the mode in which it was performed, then these cases make *neither for or against* immersion, and leave us to gather the meaning of the word from those cases in which the evidence is clear?

Notwithstanding this obvious principle, Mr. Elder goes on to cite the baptism of Paul, and because it is not *mentioned* that he went out of the room where he was, he informs us that "the natural inference is that he was baptized by sprinkling or pouring;" and would not water, we ask, be needed for this?

and yet there is no mention of any being brought. Is not the expression "He arose and was baptized," as proper to express the action of a man who then immediately went forth to a suitable place for baptism as any other? If the words were to be read "he arose and was sprinkled," we apprehend Mr. Elder would have no difficulty in informing us, according to the principle already alluded to in speaking of the baptism of the 3000 at Jerusalem, that the bringing of water being a subordinate and unimportant fact in the narration, was left by the historian to be supplied by the minds of his readers: And why, then, we ask, if the words be read, "and he arose and was immersed," may not the mind supply the subordinate and unimportant fact of his going to a place where immersion could be performed? It really requires no common stock of patience to be under the necessity of gravely replying to such childish trifling as this. Did Mr. Elder *never* perceive that this sort of objection is childish trifling? Did it appear to him a manly way of sustaining his change of principles, to rake together every quibble that the most ingenious fancy can devise, instead of taking his ground on such grave and plausible arguments *only* as are entitled to an answer?

The next case of alleged improbability is that of the Jailer and his household at Philippi (Acts xvi. 25—34.) We reply in the words of Prof. Ripley, (p. 99.) "A careful examination of the sacred writer's account, suggests no improbability as to this instance of baptism. The following appears to have been the order of events. Paul and Silas were thrust into the inner prison; an earthquake occurred; the jailor sprang in and fell down before Paul and Silas; he brought them out; they speak to him and to all that were in *his house*, (Acts xvi. v. 32); he then washed their stripes: baptism was next performed; after which he brought them *into his house* (Acts xvi. v. 34.) After instruction, then, had been given *in the house*, baptism was performed; and after baptism, the company *returned to the house*. Did they not leave the house, in order that baptism might be administered? And why did the administration of baptism require them to leave the house?" It is impossible to conceive of any reason why they should do so, except for the purpose of immersion in some bath or pool. In his former letters (page 34,) Mr. Elder gives us the following quotation from Mr. Judson's sermon preached at Calcutta. "This case can present no difficulty to the minds of any of you, my brethren, who may have been within the yard of the prison in this city, or are acquainted with the fact that prison yards in the East, as well as the yards and gardens of private houses,

are usually furnished with tanks, viz. cisterns of water, p. 7." Mr. Elder's memory appears very treacherous, for he takes no notice of this striking fact in his recent publication.

We come to the baptism of Cornelius (Acts x.) Nothing new is alleged by Mr. Elder in this case. He reasons, as in the former cases, that because it is *not mentioned* that they went out of the house, therefore they did not go. We reply as before it is *not mentioned* that water was brought for the purpose of sprinkling, may we not with equal reason infer that therefore they were not sprinkled? As the expression "Can any one forbid water," used in the case of Cornelius, is sometimes supposed to indicate the bringing of water, we beg to remind the reader that the expression is evidently *elliptical*: the evidence in other cases must determine how the ellipsis is to be supplied. It is as easy certainly to fill it up by saying "Can any one forbid water to be used, or the use of water, for immersion," as to say "Can any one forbid water to be brought for sprinkling."

We close this chapter with the following quotation from Mr. Elder himself, (see his former letters p. 35.) "The fact is that the objections that are brought against immersion from these cases, arise from the supposition that the habits and manners of the East are similar to ours. But an acquaintance with the history of that country REMOVES ALL THESE OBJECTIONS AT ONCE. If there were cisterns of water in the prison yards, and in the yards and gardens of private houses generally in the East, there would be no difficulty in finding a suitable place for the immersion of the Jailer and his family, and ALL OTHERS mentioned in Scripture. In the case of the baptism of the Eunuch (Mr. Elder tells Mr. Jackson his opponent) you are at much pains to prove that the water in which he was baptized was not more than ankle deep. This attempt to set aside immersion, appears to me to display more zeal than good policy. On this case I shall make a quotation from Dr. Wall. "That immersion was the practice of the primitive church is so plain and clear, by an infinite number of passages, that one cannot but PITY THE WEAK ENDEAVOURS of such pedobaptists as would maintain the negative of it. It is a great want of PRUDENCE AS WELL AS HONESTY to refuse to grant to an adversary what is certainly true, and may be proved so. It creates a jealousy of all the rest that one says.—Hist. of Inf. Bap. Part 2. p. 462."* Whether this remark does not now apply with even greater force to Mr. Elder himself, we leave our readers to judge.

* It is page 296 of our Edition.

CHAPTER III.

MEANING OF THE WORD BAPTIZO. PEDOBAPTIST TESTIMONY
RESPECTING IT.

HAVING in the preceeding chapter examined all the cases of baptism, in which, it is alleged that it is improbable that immersion was the method employed, we are now to turn our attention to the meaning of the word *baptizo* : if this can be ascertained, and it be found to possess a single specific meaning, every one of course perceives that this must set the question forever at rest.

I. In a popular treatise like the present, it is not easy to put an examination of this sort in a shape that will be very intelligible or instructive. This difficulty has, however, been greatly lessened by some recent investigations on the *philology* of this word by Mr. Stuart of Andover, and Mr. Ripley of Newton, in Massachusetts, Professors of Biblical criticism, in the respective Theological Seminaries in those places.— These gentlemen have so thoroughly investigated the subject, as to leave apparently nothing unsaid that relates to it. To any one capable of pursuing a learned investigation we recommend the perusal of their respective treatises, with the firm persuasion that if these fail to produce conviction, then satisfaction as to the meaning of the word *baptizo* must be hopeless.

In referring thus to Professor Stuart, whose reputation as a biblical critic is recognized in some of the first Universities in Europe, the writer of these pages cannot deny himself the opportunity of a heartfelt though passing tribute of affection and respect to his former tutor. He gratefully remembers the impartial kindness which as a baptist and a stranger at a pedobaptist seminary, he received from Prof. Stuart, and all connected with the institution at Andover. It is with a respectful deference mingled with affection, therefore, that he receives the opinions of Prof. Stuart; but, at the same time he cannot but feel that while, after the large concessions which the love of truth has drawn from Mr. S. there remained but very narrow ground of evidence that *baptizo* ever departs from its radical meaning of immerse or plunge; Mr. Ripley in his reply, has most effectually removed that ground narrow as it was, and has left *baptizo* in the undisturbed possession of its original and proper signification. We shall now

refer as briefly as clearness will admit, to these works, and present their results to the view of the reader. Mr. Stuart first pursues an extended inquiry through the pages of *classical* Greek, from which we take the following extracts :

Biblical Repository, No. x. p. 298. " 1. *Bapto* and *Baptizo*, mean to dip, plunge, or immerge into any thing liquid. All lexicographers and critics of any note are agreed in this. My proof of this position, then, need not necessarily be protracted ; but for the sake of ample confirmation, I must beg the reader's patience, while I lay before him as briefly as may be, the results of an investigation, which seems to have no room for doubt." He then produces instances from Homer, Pindar, Aristotle, Aristophanes, Heraclides Ponticus, Herodotus, Aratus, Xenophon, Plutarch, Lucian, Diodorus Siculus, Plato, Epictetus, Hippocrates, Strabo, Polybius, and Josephus. He then adds as follows : " It were easy to enlarge this list of testimonies to usage ; but the reader will not desire it. He may see many examples in Carson's recent publication on baptism, which I did not see until after this present dissertation was written." (On referring, accordingly, to Carson we find, besides many further quotations from some of the authors quoted by Mr. Stuart, the following additional Greek authors cited to the same point, Porphyry, Themistius, the Sibylline verses Helioid, and Æsop.) Mr. Stuart proceeds, " It is impossible to doubt that the words *bapto* and *baptizo* have, in the Greek classical writers, the sense of dip, plunge, immerge, sink, etc. But there are variations from this usual and prevailing signification ; i. e. shades of meaning kindred to this (as happens in respect to most words,) some literal and some figurative, which demand of course our special notice." Of these variations of meaning however *only one* belongs to *bap. to*, which the reader will understand is the word *invariably* used in scripture to describe the ordinance in question. This meaning Mr. Stuart notices as follows : " 5. The word *baptizo* means to overwhelm, literally and figuratively in a variety of forms." And in support of this usage Mr. Stuart quotes Aristotle, Euenus, Heliodorus, Clemens Alexandrinus. One instance of these will shew how slight the variation in these cases, if indeed there be any at all, from the first and primary meaning, immerse or plunge. " Aristotle, De Mirab. Ausc. speaks of a saying among the Phenicians, that there were certain places beyond the pillars of Hercules, which when it is ebb tide, are not overflowed, (*me baptizesthai*,) but at full tide are overflowed (*katakluzesthai*), which word is here used as an equivalent for *baptizesthai*." One might almost as well use the word immerse as

overflowed in this case ; that which is overflowed is immersed. Mr. Stuart then pursues his examination through the Septuagint and Apocrypha. In the Septuagint, *baptizo* occurs in the sense of *to plunge* and *to overwhelm*, but *never* in any other ; in the Apocrypha, Mr. Stuart thinks there are two instances in which it has the sense of *to wash*, the *only two* in the whole course of his examination thus far. Whether those exceptions deserve to be considered as such, the reader must judge. The first is in Judith, c. 12, 7. which Mr. Stuart thus translates, "She went out by night into the valley of Bethulia, and washed herself, (*ebaptizeto*) in the camp at the fountain of water." Now with the evidence which we have already seen of the abundant use of bathing in the East, and the universal use of *baptizo* in all other cases in the sense of *immerse* or *overwhelm*, why should we not give it the same sense here ? The only reason Prof. Stuart offers is that, it is not probable that Judith plunged into a fountain in the midst of the camp. But why is this so improbable ? It was at night she bathed ; it might be in a retired part of the camp ; fountains often form natural basins ; and besides, it is not unlikely that there may have been, near the fountain, artificial conveniences for bathing, contrived, after the Eastern manner, for the use of the camp. If in the classical use of the word there is no other meaning attached to it but to plunge or overwhelm, none in the Septuagint, and none but these two in the Apocrypha ; ought not one to feel bound to give the word a corresponding sense here, unless something in the circumstances of the case rendered it not merely improbable but *impossible* ? To us it appears both *possible* and *probable* that she immersed herself according to the usual custom of the times.

The next case is Sirach 31. 31. [English version, Ecclesiasticus, 34: 25.] which Prof Stuart thus renders, "*baptizomenos apo necrou*, he who is CLEANSED from a dead [carcase] and toucheth it again, what does he profit by his washing (to loutro autou) ?" And he refers to Lev. 11: 25. 28, 31, 39, 40. Num. 19. 18. etc. passages in which are contained the directions of the Mosaic law concerning the purifying of those who should touch a dead body, as illustrations of the meaning. Let the reader refer to those places and judge for himself, whether they are such as decide the present question. The passage in Leviticus merely respects the washing of the *clothes* of him who became thus defiled, in which case, however, the clothes doubtless were immersed ; the passage in Numbers where the purifying of the person himself is mentioned, in the English version stands thus ; "and whosoever toucheth —

a dead body, or a bone of a man or a grave, shall be unclean seven days, and a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water and sprinkle it upon the tent and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave : And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh day ; and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes and *bathe himself in water*, and shall be clean at even." Now the only question here is how was this bathing performed ? What was the practice of the Jews ? When the law required a man to bathe himself was it always fulfilled by an entire immersion of the body in water ? If such was the case, then the passage in Ecclesiasticus, where a person so purified is said to be *baptizomenos* must of course refer to such immersion, for in every other place in the whole circle of Greek literature its meaning is to plunge, to immerse, to overwhelm. Prof. Ripley in his reply to Mr. Stuart, (page 31, &c.) has conclusively shewn by an extended investigation, that the Jewish method of bathing was to plunge the body in water, it meant in fact with them what it ordinarily means with us. Of the many proofs collected by him to this effect we content ourselves with quoting the following, " Lightfoot, (says Mr. Ripley,) on Mark 7: 4, produces from a Jewish writer a sentence which shews that pollution occasioned by the touch of the dead, was so great that the person ' must plunge his whole body.' And when ' the prophet (2 K. 5: 10—14,) directed' Naaman, ' go and wash,' [*bathe*, the same word *rechatz*, which occurs in Numbers xix. 19.] ' in Jordan seven times, what did Naaman understand the prophet as enjoining in this direction ? Let the 14th verse speak, then went he down and *dipped himself* seven times in Jordan." This leaves no doubt as to what the Jews understood by washing oneself, it was a complete bathing of the body in water.

Let the reader, then, bear in mind, that he has now before him, on the testimony of one of the first biblical critics of the present day, the *whole* evidence derived from every source, except the New Testament, of the meaning of the word *baptizo*. It doubtless occurs in hundreds of instances in Greek literature, and amongst them all, there are but these two, last considered, about which there can be a moment's hesitation. And with respect to these two, on examination, we perceive, that there is no reason to believe that the word is here used in a sense at all removed from its original meaning of immerse or plunge, which it possesses in all other instances.

But in the New Testament there remain several cases

about which a question is also raised, these are as follows : Mark vii. 3. 4. "The Pharisees [returning] from the market eat not except they baptizo [immerse] themselves, (*baptizontai*.)" Luke xi. 38. "But the Pharisee seeing him, wondered that he had not first baptized [immersed] himself, (*ebaptisthe*) before dinner." Mark vii. 4. "The baptisms [immersions] (*baptismous*) of cups and pots and brazen vessels, and couches," (*clinton*, is couches not tables.) Mark vii. 8. "The washings, baptisms, [immersions] (*baptismois*) of pots and cups." Hebrews ix. 10. "Only in meats, and drinks, and divers baptisms, [immersions] (*baptismois*.)" In all these instances where either the verb *baptizo*, or the noun *baptismois*, derived from it as employed, the English version has given *wash* or *washing* as the translation ; but as, in all other places, consisting perhaps of hundreds of instances, without *one single exception* in the classics, the Septuagint, and the Apocrypha, *baptizo* means immerse or overwhelm ; we must first inquire, how the purifying of the Jews was performed, in order to ascertain whether a departure from the prevalent sense of the word can be allowed in these cases. Such departure plainly ought not to be allowed in any of them, if *any* of the Jewish rites of purifying were performed by immersion, for in such case the *baptisms* (translated washings) in the cited cases, were of course immersions. These cases Mr. Stuart cites as proofs of *baptizo* having in scripture the sense of to wash, but he simply cites them *without any comment*. Mr. Ripley in his reply has shewn satisfactorily that they all refer to those instances of purifying which were performed by immersion ; our limits will only permit a few quotations.

1. On Mark vii. 3. 4. Mr. Ripley shews that the Jews in returning from the market, were in the habit either of *bathing* the whole body, or *plunging* the hands in water, in proof of the former he cites the following pedobaptist witnesses.

"VATABLUS, a distinguished professor of Hebrew at Paris, for whom the Jews of his acquaintance entertained a very high regard, says on Mark 7: 4. that "they bathed their whole persons." GROTIUS, on the same passage, says, "They cleansed themselves more carefully from defilements contracted at the market, to wit, by not only washing their hands, but even by immersing their body."

It perhaps, however, is fully as probable that the baptizing here is the plunging the *hands* in water ; the whole passage is as follows : "For the Pharisees and all the Jews except they wash their hands oft [*nipsontai*,] eat not, holding the tradition of the elders : and *when they come* from the market, except they

[*baptisontai*] baptize [their hands may if necessary be understood,] they eat not." The following extract from Dr. Geo. CAMPBELL, sets this passage in a very clear point of view, "For illustrating this passage," says he, "let it be observed, 1st, that the two verbs rendered *wash* in the English translation, are different in the original. The first is *nipsontai*, properly translated *wash*; the second is *baptisontai*, which limits us to a particular mode of washing; for *baptizo* denotes to plunge or dip." He then quotes with approbation the following remark of Wetstein, "*baptizesthai* is, to immerse the hands in water, *niptesthai*, to pour water on the hands," and proceeds as follows: "this is more especially the import, when the words are, as here, opposed to each other. Otherwise *niptein*, like the general word to *wash* in English, may be used for *baptizein* to dip, because the genus comprehends the species; but not conversely *baptizein* for *niptein*, the species for the genus. By this interpretation, the words, which, as rendered in the common version, are unmeaning, appear both significant and emphatical; and the contrast in the Greek is preserved in the translation." Accordingly, Dr. Campbell translates the passage thus, "For the Pharisees — eat not until they have washed their hands, by pouring a little water upon them; and if they become from market by dipping them."*

In proof of this practice of dipping the hands Mr. Ripley quotes the following authorities, all pedobaptists.

"ROSENMUELLER, in his note on this passage, speaks of two modes of washing the hands, namely, immersion of the hands in water, and when one hand is washed by the other."

"KUINOEL, also speaking of the opinion entertained by some that a total ablution was performed in case of returning from the market, says, 'But an immersion of the hands, daily performed, would have abundantly sufficed for this end, that is for purification from contact with the multitude.'"

"From LIGHTFOOT" Mr. Ripley tells us, he gathers, "the following on Mark 7: 4, he says, 'The Jews used *netilath yadim* 'the washing of hands,' and *tebilath yadim* 'the plunging of the hands.' And the word *nipsontai* 'wash' in our evangelist seems to answer to the former,—and *baptisontai* 'baptize' to the latter.'—'Those that remain at home eat not, — 'unless they wash the fist.' But those that come from the market eat not. — 'unless they plunge their fist into the water,' being ignorant and uncertain, what uncleanness they come near unto in the market.'—'The phrase therefore,' Lightfoot adds,

* Ripley, 44, 45.

[viz in the passage in Mark) 'seems to be meant of the immersion or plunging of the hands only.' "But I remark, though it were only the hands that were plunged, yet the meaning of *baptizo* is sufficiently obvious."

2. "The preceeding copious examination," continues Mr. Ripley, "helps us, of course, rightly to understand the quotation from Luke 11: 38. which is next brought forward to sustain the meaning *to wash* ascribed to *baptize*;" "'But the Pharisee seeing him wondered that he had not first immersed (*ebaptisthe*) [that is himself, or his hands] before dinner ;' — By the preceding part of the chapter it appears, that our Lord and his host had been exposed to a great mixture of company, and therefore needed in the judgment of the Pharisee, the more formal and thorough sort of washing. On this passage, too, Lightfoot observes, 'there is *netilim yadim* 'a washing of the hands,' and *tebilim yadim* 'a dipping of the hands;' this clause we are upon refers to the latter. The Pharisee wonders, that Christ had not washed his hands ; nay that he had not dipped them all over in the water, when he was newly come, *ex agoras*, that is *ec ton ochlon epathroizomenon*, ver. 29. 'from the people that were gathered thick together.'" In this passage therefore *baptizo* still has the sense of *dip*, or *immerse*.

To this, the objection is sometimes made, that though the word *baptizo* may in the above passages be used to signify a dipping of the hands, yet it does not follow that it is ever used to signify a dipping or immersion of the whole person. But the obvious answer to this objection is, that the word is used to signify dipping or immersion, it matters not of what. In the two cases Mark vii. 3. 4. and Luke xi. 38. an immersion of the person, either in whole or in part, is certainly intended, if of the whole person, the word *himself* or *themselves* is to be supplied ; if of the hands, then the words *the hands* are to be supplied ; for the Greek verb, though in the middle voice, may have an object after it, as is evident from Mark vii. 3. where is the expression *nipsontai tas cheiras*, in which case *nipsontai* "wash," though in the middle voice, governs the object *tas cheiras* "the hands." When therefore the word *baptizo* is used in reference to the hands or any other object, it implies that the hands, or that object, are dipped or immersed—it implies in fact a total immersion of the thing dipped : So, when it is applied to a man, it of course implies his total immersion ; and consequently when this word *baptizo* is used, as it is by the Saviour in his commission to the apostles, in the words, "*baptizing them* ;" and in all cases where the ordinance of baptism is mentioned in the New Testament to have been performed, as in

the case of Philip and the eunuch, where it is said "*and he baptized him*;" the immersion in these instances must relate to the whole person; we cannot in these cases insert the words, *his or their hands*, instead of the pronouns *them* and *him*; this would be to *alter* the language of scripture, not to *interpret* it.

3. With reference to the remaining cases in Mark vii. 4. and 8. and in Heb. ix. 10. we select the following extracts from Prof. Ripley's work. "That the word rendered *washings* in these passages ought so far as philology is concerned, to be rendered *immersions*, would be a plain inference from the preceding investigations." That is, the word *baptismous* being found to mean *immersions* in every other case, it ought of course to be so rendered here also. Prof. Ripley then proceeds to shew that such translation is consistent with the Jewish customs. "In Lev. 11. 32." he observes, "it is directed, that any vessel upon which the dead body of an unclean animal had fallen, 'whatsoever vessel it be, wherein any work is done, it must be put into water,' in order to be cleansed. The only exception was in respect to earthen vessels, which, being thus polluted, were to be broken in pieces (v. 33.) Now how credible it is, and how accordant with the language of Mark, that the superstitious spirit of the Jews, in subsequent times, extended the requisition to other cases besides that of pollution by the touch of the dead; so that even on ordinary occasions, when they thought religion required the articles to be cleansed, the cleansing must be performed by immersing them in water." — "The Jewish rules, which Dr. Gill quotes in his commentary on Mark 7: 4." require 'even beds to be cleansed by immersion, when they had become defiled.'"

"And what should hinder us from employing the word *immersions* in Heb. 10: 9? Immersions were practised by the Jews in accordance with the Mosaic ritual; and why may we not consider the apostle, when naming the immersions, as taking a part for the whole, of the legal purifications, and consequently as not departing from the specific original meaning of the word he has employed?" In answer to Mr. Elder's gloss, on p. 74. we add, that the sprinkling mentioned in v. 19. plainly refers to v. 13, and was one of the *carnal ordinances* mentioned in v. 10. but surely not one of the *immersions* practised under the Jewish law.

These examinations, then, shew conclusively, that while the word *baptiza* in the vast majority of cases has *certainly* the sense of *plunge, immerse, overwhelm*, it *no where* has *certainly* any other sense; and that those cases which may at first appear doubtful, having nothing in them which makes it impossible for

immersion to express the sense of the passage, must be taken to bear the same signification, in conformity with the universal usage. Perhaps the sense of no word in any language is better ascertained than that of *baptizo*.

In addition to what has been said, we might refer our readers to Lexicons and Encyclopædias without end. They all, so far as we have been able to ascertain give to *baptizo* and its derivatives the *primary* meaning of immerse. We have at the present time referred to Hederick, Robinson's Wahl, Schleusner, Scapula, and Schreyelius, who all give this testimony, as also Rees' Cyclopædia and the Encyclopædia Britannica. In the secondary sense, indeed, we find in the Lexicons the meaning *wash* or *cleanse* attached to the word ; but the references made, in support of this sense, never furnish any other case than those in Mark and Luke, which we have already considered; and as the investigation made by Professor Stuart has now put the reader in possession of all the existing evidence for such a meaning ; he is capable of judging for himself whether those instances justify a departure from the universal usage of the Greek language in other cases.

II. Such an examination as the labours of Professors Stuart and Ripley have made intelligible to almost every capacity, would be sufficient to decide this subject were it not that many persons are more influenced by *names* than reason. On pages 64 and 65 of his Letters, Mr. Elder has given us a list of pedobaptist writers, to prove that the word does *not always* mean *immerse* ! The good sense of the reader, however, will of course enable him to perceive that it is not at all extraordinary, that a multitude of such authorities may always be gathered from the advocates of a *party*. Men are easily influenced by the prejudices of education, in favour of their own system. Error, once formed, is speedily propagated ; men borrow notions from one another ; few carefully and thoroughly investigate for themselves. A single *pedobaptist* witness of learning and candour, in proof of the meaning which we contend for, as belonging exclusively to *baptizo*, will of course weigh against a host of names in opposition, for what should induce such a man to write against his own side, but the love of truth ? Such a witness is *Dr. George Campbell*, a minister of the Kirk of Scotland, and late Principal of Marischal College, Aberdeen. Dr. Campbell was a man of extensive erudition, and to this day his writings, relating to the correct and critical study of the bible, are regarded and used as works of standard excellence and utility. In his notes on Matt. iii. 11. he remarks as follows : " The word *baptizein* both in sacred writers, and in clas-

sical, signifies 'to dip,' 'to plunge,' to immerse, and was rendered by Tertullian, the oldest of the Latin Fathers, '*tingere*' the term used for dying cloth which was by immersion. It is always construed suitably to this meaning. Thus it is *en hudati* [in the water,] *en to Jordano* [in the Jordan.] But I would not lay much stress on the preposition *en* which answering to the Hebrew *beth*, may denote *with* as well as *in*, did not the whole phraseology in regard to this ceremony concur in evincing the same thing; accordingly the baptized are said 'to arise,' 'emerge,' 'or ascend,' v. 16. *apo tou hudatos*, and Acts viii. 39. *ek tou hudatos*, 'from out of the water.' Let it be observed further, that the words *raino* and *rantizo*, used in scripture for sprinkling, are never construed in this manner. "I will sprinkle you with clear water says God," Ezek. xxxvi. 25. or as it runs in the English translation, literally from the Hebrew, "I will sprinkle clear water upon you," is in the Septuagint, '*Rano eph' humas hutor* and not as *baptizo* is always construed, *Rano humas EN katharo hudati*. See also Exod. xxix. 21. Lev. vi. 27. xvi. 14. Had *baptizo* been here employed in the sense of *raino* 'I sprinkle' (which as far as I know, it NEVER IS, IN ANY USE SACRED OR CLASSICAL) the expression would doubtless have been '*Ego men baptizo eph' humas hutor* or *apo tou hudatos*, [I sprinkle upon you water or with water] agreeably to the examples referred to." Let this extract serve for an answer to Mr. Elder's assertion on page 75 § 1, about the Greek particles. Dr. Campbell's name is certainly sufficient to weigh against Mr. Elder's, and as he gives no authority for his assertion, it is his name only which supports it.

In the same place Dr. Campbell makes the following remark: "It is to be regretted that we have so much evidence that even good and learned men allow their judgments to be warped by the sentiments or customs of the sect which they prefer. The true partizan, of whatever denomination, always inclines to correct the diction of the spirit by that of the party." This quotation, we think, from a pedobaptist speaking of pedobaptists, is a complete answer to the observations of Mr. Elder on page 66 of his Letters, about "the large number of learned able and pious men," whose faith he would have us follow. If one man such as Dr. Campbell, on the same side with them, is compelled by truth to acknowledge that they are wrong in their sentiments respecting the meaning of *baptizo*, it must be strong evidence that will convince us, nevertheless, that they are right. It matters not on what ground Dr. Campbell continued to use sprinkling. It is clear it was not on the ground of that being the meaning of *baptizo*.

Another witness of learning, and some candour, is *Dr. Wall* Vicar of Shoreham, the author of the history of infant baptism, for which he received the thanks of the Convention of all the Clergy of the Church of England. This book is, we believe, the standard treatise with that church ; and of course whatever sentiments such a person retained, every thing in the way of concession to those whose sentiments he opposes, ought to go far as evidence on their side. *Dr. Wall* was strongly opposed to sprinkling, and in vol. iii. page 352, (London Ed. 1819,) he writes as follows: "To those who use sprinkling instead of dipping, or even of pouring water, (which last is enjoined by our church, even in the weakest child's case,) I would humbly represent the consideration of the duty of obedience which they owe, not only to the rules of the church to which they have promised to conform,—but also and chiefly to our Saviour himself, whose word of command is *baptize*. I wish they would study the notion and emphasis [the specific force and meaning] of that word. We ARE FORCED TO SOME PAINS in defence of our practice, against those who pretend that it does necessarily and absolutely include *dipping* in its signification. I think we must not and cannot deny that it includes *washing* in its signification. They will do well to consider whether they shall be able to justify before our Saviour that a drop, or a sprinkle or two of water can be so fairly understood, to be a washing of the person in this sense, as pouring water is."

That *Dr. Wall* held strenuously to infant baptism we admit ; and in what manner he poured water on children in baptism, so as that they could be said to be *washed*, we do not know ; but this much is plain, that he evidently concedes that the primary meaning of the word *baptizo* is *dip, immerse*, and that he found it difficult, "he was forced to some pains," to make it appear that it meant any thing else. He in fact grounded his opinion that it might mean *wash*, on those passages which we have already examined, and shewn to be *inconclusive*.

Dr. Wall also helps us to the names of several *pedobaptists*, who evidently were not quite easy under the common practice of sprinkling. In vol. ii. p. 301. he quotes *Dr. Whitaker*, Regius Professor at Cambridge, as saying, "Though in case of grown persons that are in health, I think dipping to be better, yet in the case of infants and of sickly people, I think sprinkling sufficient." Why should a *pedobaptist* professor of divinity, think *dipping* in any case to be better, if he did not know that the evidence was strong in favour of this mode.

Again, *Dr. Wall* tells us, (page last quoted,) that "*Mr. Blake*, who wrote in 1645," speaking of sprinkling says, "I

leave them to defend it that use it." He tells us also (page 313,) that "*Sotus* gives his opinion that 'baptism ought still to be given by dipping; so as that it is not lawful to give it otherwise, unless for some necessary or creditable, and reasonable cause.'" "*Estius*," he says also, 'does much commend dipping, but now that the other is the common custom would have nothing altered.'" Thus strangely men reason about the commands of their Saviour. These learned men surely would not much commend dipping, or think it the only lawful mode, except in certain cases, unless they found strong evidence for that opinion; that evidence must have been among other things the manifest meaning of the word, and yet they pass that by in compliance with prevailing custom!

Dr. Wall also admits concerning the celebrated Bishop *Jeremy Taylor*, and *Mr. Dan. Rogers*, that "they do both of them plead hard that [effusion, pouring] ought NOT TO BE USED but in cases of necessity, and that the ministers should in no other case dispense with the act of immersion." Again, "*Mr. Rogers*," he tells us "was for retrieving the use of dipping, as witnessed by antiquity, approved by Scripture, required by the Church, and SYMBOLICAL WITH THE THINGS SIGNIFIED IN BAPTISM. He also cites *Dr. Towerson* as having recited the arguments for immersion, and saying, "How to take off the force of these arguments altogether I mean not to consider, partly because our [the Episcopal] church seems to persuade such an immersion; and partly because I cannot but think the forementioned arguments to be so full of force, AS TO EVINCE THE NECESSITY THEREOF, where there is not some greater necessity to occasion an alteration of it." "*Dr. Whitby* says," continues Dr. Wall, "It were to be wished that this custom [of immersion] might be again of general use; and aspersion only permitted, as of old, in case of the *Clinici*, and in present danger of death." We may in this place mention that Dr. Wall fell into the notion, which we have already spoken of as an early error in the church, that without baptism no one could be saved; this doubtless increased his eagerness to prove infant baptism to be correct, while he is far more candid with respect to immersion. We suppose that the other writers quoted from him must have held the same sentiment from their frequent mention of *cases of necessity*. What necessity can there be to perform an ordinance of Christ in any other way than that of his appointment? Dr. Wall proceeds as follows: "These (and possibly many more) have openly declared their thoughts concerning the present custom; and abundance of others have so largely and industriously proved that a *total immersion* was as *Dr. Cave* says, 'the

almost constant and universal custom of the primitive times,' that they have sufficiently intimated their inclinations to be for it now."

Here, then, is the standard author of the Church of England on the subject of baptism, distinctly avowing his own wish, and calling in a host of learned men to sustain him in it, that immersion might be again used as the ordinary method of baptism. These gentlemen might *with some pains* satisfy their consciences that pouring would answer: still who can believe but that they saw plainly that the evidence was with overpowering weight on the other side; and one of them, Mr. Rogers, as we see from Dr. Wall himself, distinctly declares that his reason for wishing a restoration of the primitive practice, was not only because it was "witnessed by antiquity, approved by scripture, and required by the church, but because it was *symbolical of the things signified in baptism*." The immersion of the whole body being a sign of the entire cleansing of the soul by the spirit, as well as the being "buried with Christ."

Mr. Elder (Letters, pages 68, 69,) labours to make his readers believe that Mr. Judson misquoted unfairly in the case of the learned authors he has adduced; he surely will not charge Dr. Wall with unfair quotation. The reason he alleges for charging Mr. Judson with unfairness, is that his quotations make the authors of them speak a language which they never intended. A garbled quotation we admit may do this, but a passage may be so worded as to render it impossible to suppose that the author meant any thing but what is expressed. Whether this be not plainly the character of some, at least, of Mr. Judson's quotations, we sh. 'l now give the reader an opportunity of judging. The following are taken from Mr. Elder's former letters, p. 42.

Alstedius—"To baptize signifies *only* to immerse, *not* to wash."—*Lexicon Theolog.* c. 12. p. 221.

J. J. Wetstenius—"To baptize is to *plunge* to dip the body; or a part of the body *being under water* is said to be baptized."—*Comment.* ad Matt. 3: 6.

J. Altingius—"For baptism is immersion, when the whole body is immersed; but the term baptism is *never* used concerning aspersion."—*Comment.* ad Heb. 9: 10.

Beza—"Christ commanded us to be baptized, by which word it is certain immersion is signified. Nor does *baptizo* signify to wash, except by consequence; for it properly signifies to immerse for the sake of dying—To be baptized in water signifies *no other* than to be immersed in water, which is the ex-

ternal ceremony of baptism."—Epis. 2. ad Thom. Tilium, Annot. in Mark 7: 4. and Acts 19: 3.

Luther—"The term baptism is a Greek word, it may be rendered *immersion*; as when we plunge something in water that it may be entirely covered. And though that custom is now abolished among the generality; (for even children are not entirely immersed, but have a little water poured on them,) nevertheless they OUGHT TO BE COMPLETELY IMMERSSED, and immediately drawn out. For the ETYMOLOGY of the word evidently REQUIRES it."—Opera, Tom. 1. p. 72.

We have compared these quotations with Booth, who also gives them, and find them correct; there is nothing added in Booth to alter the character of them in the least, as Mr. Elder insinuates (page 68); nor are they all *servilely copied* by Mr. Judson, as Mr. Elder asserts, for the quotation from Luther is evidently a different translation and *not* that contained in Booth. Quotations to a similar effect might be made almost without end, but we fear lest we should weary our readers, and shall close with but a few additional names of acknowledged celebrity.

WITSIUS: (Professor of divinity in the universities of Franeker, Utrecht, and Leyden,) "It cannot be denied that the native signification of the words *baptein* and *baptizein*, is to *plunge to dip*."—Æcon. Fæd. L. iv. cxvi. § 13.

SALMASIUS: "Baptism is *immersion*, and was administered, in ancient times, according to the force and meaning of the word. Now it is only rhanism, or sprinkling; not *immersion* or dipping."—De cæs. vir. p. 669.

CALVIN: "The word baptize signifies to *immerse*, and the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient church."—Inst. Chris. Relig. L. iv. c. xv. § 19.

VITRINGA: "The act of baptizing, is the immersion of believers in water. *This expresses the force of the word*. Thus also it was performed by Christ and his apostles."—Aph. Sanct. Theol. Aph. 884.

CASAUBONUS: "This was the rite of baptizing, that persons were *plunged* into the water; which the very word *baptizein*, to baptize, sufficiently declares.—Whence we understand it was not without reason, that some long ago insisted on the immersion of the whole body in the ceremony of baptism, for they urge the word *baptizein* to baptize."—An. in Matt. iii. 6.

DIODATI: "Baptized; viz. *plunged* in water.—In baptism, being *dipped* in water according to the ancient ceremony, it is a sacred figure unto us, that sin ought to be drowned in us, by God's spirit."—An. on Matt. iii. 6. Rom. vi. 4.]

MR. SELDEN : " In England, of late years, I ever thought the parson baptized his own fingers, rather than the child."—Works vol. vi. Col. 2008.

VENEMA : " The word *baptizein*, to baptize—is no where used in the Scripture for sprinkling ; no not in Mark vii. 4."—Inst. Hist. Eccl. Vet. et Nov. Test. Tem. iii. Lec. 1. §138.

DR. ISAAC BARROW : " The action is *baptizing*, or *immersing* in water.—The mersion also in water, and the emersion thence doth figure our death to the former [worldly defilements] and receiving [reviving] to a new life."—Works vol. 1. p. 518, 520. Ed. 1722.

LONDON REVIEW, for June 1776, p. 489 : " That the letter of the Scripture is in favor of the Baptists, (or, as they are still absurdly called, Anabaptists,) cannot without evasion and equivocation be denied."

All these last quoted authorities will be found with many more in Booth's *pedobaptism examined*, vol 1. chap. 2 : we conclude with the following.

BOSSUET : (Bishop of Meaux,) " To baptize signifies to plunge, as is granted by all the world."—Scrip. Guide, p. 7.

MACKNIGHT : " Castalio has misrepresented the meaning of scripture, in translating *baptizo* by *lavo* to wash, and *baptisma* by *lotio*, a washing." (vol. 1. p. 31.) Again, " Christ submitted to be baptized, that is to be buried under the water by John, and to be raised out of it again, as an emblem of his future death and resurrection."—Notes on Rom. vi. 4—6. See Campbell and Macalla's debate on baptism 166.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON : Referring to Rom. vi. 4. " We are buried with him by baptism, &c." says, " where the dipping into the waters is referred to, as representing our dying with Christ ; and the return thence, as expressive of our rising with him."—Com. on 1 Pet. iii. 21.

III. It ought to be distinctly noticed that *baptizo* not only means immerse, but it is expressly used in *contrast* with other words which mean less than immerse. So in Mark vii. 3. 4. as we have seen, it is contrasted with *nipto* ; and *Witsius*, *Beza* and *Casaubon*, shew that in classical use it means " more than *epipolazein*, which is to swim lightly on the surface ; but less than *dunein*, which is to go down to the bottom and be destroyed."—See *Pæd. Ex.* I. 44. 46. 49.

IV. Another important testimony to the meaning of *baptizo* which ought not to be omitted is the practice of the whole Greek church, that is of all the professed christians in the world,

except those who have derived their opinions through the church of Rome. Dr. Wall's admissions on this subject will not be disputed. He says, "The Greek Church in all the branches of it, does still use immersion." And again, "All the christians in Asia, all in Africa, and about one third part of Europe, are of the last sort, [that is practice immersion] in which third part of Europe are comprehended the christians of Grecia, Thracia, Servia, Bulgaria, Rascia, Walachia, Moldavia, Russia, Nigra, &c. and even the Muscovites, who if coldness of the contrary will excuse, might plead for a dispensation."

The same fact is fully conceded by Prof. Stuart, he says, "The mode of baptism by immersion, the oriental church has ALWAYS CONTINUED TO PRESERVE, even down to the present time. The members of this church are accustomed to call the members of the Western churches, *sprinkled Christians*, by way of ridicule and contempt.—They maintain that *baptizo* can mean nothing but immerge; and that *baptism by sprinkling* is as great a solecism, as immersion by aspersion."—Bib. Rep. x. 360.

Now, let it be remembered, that the word *baptizo* is Greek; that all these churches were derived from the Greek or Eastern church, at a time when Greek was the universal language; and that throughout Greece and the Levant, the Greek language is still spoken, and how difficult, if not impossible, must it be to believe that they can have mistaken the meaning of their own language.

V. To this may be added the fact that many translations of the Bible render *baptizo* immerse; not one has ever been bold enough to translate it either *pour*, *wash*, or *sprinkle*. "The New Testament," observes Dr. Chapin, "has been translated into the language of the Syrians, Armenians, Persians, Romans, Germans, Danes, Swedes, and Dutch. Now linguists tell us, that in all these languages the word *baptizo* is translated by one which means to immerse." (Chapin 37.) Luther himself has so translated it, he renders baptism by the word *tauff*, which he tells us is derived from *tieff*, which means depth, and of the same origin with which are doubtless the English *deep* and *dip*, "as if," adds Luther, "it were proper those should be *deeply immersed*, who are baptized."—See German Bible, and Booth I. 50.

In the next chapter we shall shew from history what was the early and long continued practice of the churches.

CHAPTER IV.

TESTIMONY OF HISTORY RESPECTING IMMERSION. EVIDENCE
OF PEDOBAPTISTS. BAPTISTRIES. ORIGIN OF SPRINKLING.
CHURCH OF ENGLAND RUBRIC. BAPTO. THE SAVIOUR'S
MEANING CERTAIN. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE.

I. No historical fact is more distinctly proved, than that immersion was the original practice of the church, and that it so continued, with few exceptions, for many centuries, pouring having been first introduced in case of sick persons who could not be immersed, in consequence, probably, of the notion that no one could be saved without baptism.

Dr. Mosheim, on this subject is a high authority ; speaking of John the Baptist, he says, " The exhortations of this respectable messenger were not without effect ; and those who moved by his solemn admonitions, had formed the resolution of correcting their evil dispositions, and amending their lives, were initiated into the kingdom of the Redeemer, by the ceremony of *immersion* or baptism ;" (vol. i. p. 55. London Ed. 1825.) and he goes on to inform us that in the *first century*, " The sacrament of baptism was administered — without the public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by *immersion* of the whole body in the baptismal font." (vol. i. p. 129.) Of the *second century* he says, " The persons that were to be baptized, after that they had repeated the creed, confessed and renounced their sins, and particularly the devil, and his pompous allurements, were immersed under water." (vol. i. p. 211.)

II. But *Dr. Mosheim* is not the only pedobaptist testimony in support of this fact.

Joseph de Vicecomes, of Milan, who as *Dr. Wall* informs us, (vol. ii. p. 276.) has " largely handled," " the rites and circumstances attending baptism," says, in the sixth chapter of his fourth book, " I will never cease to profess and teach that *only immersion* in water, except in case of necessity, is lawful baptism in the church. I will refute that false notion that baptism was administered in the primitive church by pouring or sprinkling."—*Chapin's Letters* 34.

Paul Maria Paciaudi : " A learned and elegant antiquary, in the fourth chapter of his second dissertation, speaking of two baptistries at Ravenna, finds fault with the artists for representing John the Baptist pouring water on the head of Jesus. " Nothing," exclaims he, " can be more monstrous than these

emblems ! Was our Lord Jesus Christ baptized by aspersion ? This is so far from being true, that nothing can be more opposite to truth, and it is to be attributed to the ignorance and rashness of workmen."—(Chapin 34.)

Schleusner, in his Lexicon under the article *Baptisma*, speaks of this word as "transferred to the sacred rite, which is by preference [*Kat' exochen*] called baptism, because those who received the ordinance were formerly immersed, [*immergebantur*] in water."

Professor Stuart, of Andover, after introducing a number of proofs, cries, "But enough. 'It is' says Augusti, 'a thing made out,' viz. the ancient practice of immersion. So indeed all the writers who have thoroughly investigated this subject, conclude. *I know of no one usage of ancient times which seems to be more clearly and certainly made out*; I cannot see how it is possible for any candid man who examines the subject, to deny this."—Bibl. Repos. x. p. 359.

Dr. Wall, also, acknowledges, that "their general and ordinary way was to baptize by immersion, or dipping the person, whether it were an infant or grown man or woman, into the water;" and considers this, as mentioned before (page 125,) to be "so plain and clear, by an infinite number of passages, that one cannot but pity," he says, "the weak endeavours of such pedobaptists as would maintain the negative of it." (vol. ii. 297.)

It would be unnecessary to multiply proofs of a fact so plain as the present, were it not for the extraordinary slowness which many shew to open their eyes to the truth; and the highly censurable want of candor which is too often exhibited with respect to it. There are those who reproach Baptists as being guilty of innovation, who regard immersion as "a new fangled notion," while if any fact in history is certain, it is, that baptism in any mode except immersion, is in fact the innovation; we therefore pray the patience of our readers while we adduce the following additional pedobaptist authorities.

Witsius : "It is certain that both John the Baptist, and the disciples of Christ, ordinarily practiced immersion; whose example was followed by the ancient church, as Vossius has shewn by producing many testimonies from the Greek and Latin writers."—Pedobap. Ex. I. 191.

Calvin : "From the words, John iii. 23, it may be inferred, that baptism was administered by John and Christ, by plunging the whole body under water. — Here we perceive how baptism was administered among the ancients; for they immersed the whole body in water. Now, it is the prevailing practice for a minister only to sprinkle the body or the head."

Confession of Helvetia : " Baptism was instituted by God : and the first that baptized was John, who *dipped* Christ in the water in Jordan."—Harmon. of Conf. p. 395.

Bishop Taylor : " The custom of the ancient churches was *not* sprinkling, but *immersion* ; in pursuance of the sense of the word [baptize,] in the commandment, and the example of our blessed Saviour. Now this was of so sacred account in their esteem, that they did not account it lawful to receive him into the clergy, who had been only sprinkled in his baptism. — In this case, therefore, the contrary custom, not only being against an Ecclesiastical law, but against the analogy and mysterious signification of the sacrament, is *NOT TO BE COMPLIED WITH* ; unless in a case of necessity."—Duct. Dubit. B. iii. c. iv. R. xv. p. 644, 645.

Dr. Priestley : " — It is certain, that in very early times there is *no* particular mention made of any person being baptized by sprinkling only, or a *partial* application of water to the body." —Hist. Corrup. vol. i. p. 66, 67.

Mr. Poole's continuators : " A great part of those who went out to hear John, were baptized, that is, *dipped* in Jordan. — It is true, the first baptisms of which we read in holy writ, were by dippings of the persons baptized."

Bishop Pearce : Speaking of the phrase, " baptized for the dead," says, " It seems to be a metaphor taken from the custom of those days in baptizing ; for the person baptized went down *under* the water and was (as it were) *buried* under it."—Note on 1 Cor. xv. 29.

Bishop Burnet : " They [the primitive ministers of the Gospel,] led them down into the water, and with no other garments but what might cover nature, they at first laid them *down in the water*, as a man is laid in a grave, and then they said those words ; I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Then they raised them up again, and clean garments were put on them : from whence came the phrases, of being baptized into Christ's death ; of our being risen with Christ, and of our putting on the Lord Jesus Christ ; of putting off the old man, and putting on the new."—Expos. xxxix. Articles p. 374, 375.

Assembly of Divines : " *Were baptized. Washed by dipping* in Jordan, as Mark vii. 4. Heb. ix. 10. — Buried with him by baptism. See Col. ii. 12. In this phrase the apostle seemeth to allude to the ancient manner of baptism which was to *dip* the parties baptized, and as it were bury them under the water for a while, and then to draw them out of it, and lift them

up, to represent the burial of our old man, and our resurrection to newness of life."—Annot. on Matt. iii. 6. and Rom. vi. 4.

Bossuet : " — In fine we read not in the scripture that baptism was otherwise administered ; and we are able to make it appear, by the acts of Councils, and by the ancient Rituals, that for THIRTEEN HUNDRED YEARS baptism was thus administered throughout the whole church, as far as was possible."—*Stennet*. p. 175, 176.

Dr. Whitby : " It being so expressly declared here [Rom. vi. 4.] and Colos. ii. 12. that we are *buried with Christ in baptism*, by being buried under water ; and the argument to oblige us to a conformity to his death, by dying to sin, being taken hence ; and this, immersion, being religiously observed BY ALL CHRISTIANS FOR THIRTEEN CENTURIES, and approved by our church, and the change of it into sprinkling, even without any allowance from the author of this institution, or any licence from any council of the church, being that which the Romanist still urgeth to justify his refusal of the cup to the laity ; it were to be wished, that this custom might be again of general use, and aspersion only permitted, as of old, in case of the *climici*, or in present danger of death."—Note on Rom. vi. 4.

Professor Stuart, of Andover, informs us that "*F. Brenner*, a Roman Catholic writer, has recently published a learned work, which contains a copious history of usages in respect to the baptismal rite." He then quotes from Brenner as follows: "Thirteen hundred years was baptism generally and ordinarily performed by the immersion of a man under water ; and only in extraordinary cases, was sprinkling or affusion permitted. These latter methods of baptism were called in question, and even prohibited."

Here, then, are *Lutherans, Calvinists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Catholics*, all giving the same testimony to this point ; and if this be not deemed sufficient, the reader may find in Booth upwards of one hundred and fifty other instances of similar acknowledgement on the part of *pedobaptists* of learning and celebrity, either that *baptizo* means primarily or else *exclusively* IMMERSE ; or that the original practice was immersion. Amongst these, we just mention in addition to the names already given, those of *Buddæus, Dr. Bentley, Bishop Reynolds, Vitringa, Bishop Patrick, Zanchius, Calnet, Turretin, Dr. Owen, Dr. Hammond, Le Clerk, Dr. Doddridge, the English Review, Bishop Davenant, Dr. Newton, Archbishop Usher, Mr. Stackhouse, Grotius, Dr. Cave, Mr. Geo. Whitfield, Bishop Stillingfleet, Mr. Locke, and Bishop Nicolson*, all of

whom distinctly concede one or other of the above named points.

It is unnecessary to offer any further reply to the charge made by Mr. Elder against Mr. Booth and Mr. Judson, for unfair quotations. The quotations themselves presented above, are a sufficient answer. The truth is, they quote pedobaptist authorities almost innumerable to prove, as we have done, that by the *acknowledgement* of pedobaptists of the highest character and learning, *against their own side*, it may be shewn that *baptizo* means primarily *immerse*; and that *immersion* was the *primitive* practice. What is unfair in this? It is one of the best understood rules of evidence, that the *admission* of a *party* is the *highest* proof. We do not say that these persons found no pretence for remaining pedobaptists, neither does Mr. Booth or Mr. Judson; but we say to those who revile the Baptists as innovators, and the practice of immersion as monstrous, see what your own writers concede. It may be as well to add that for the accuracy of the quotations from *Neander* as contained in the *Biblical Repository*, a pedobaptist work, from *Dr. Campbell*, of Aberdeen, from *Archbishop Leighton*, from *Drs. Wall*, and *Doddridge*, and from *Professor Stuart*, of Andover; we do ourselves vouch having carefully extracted them from their own works. Mr. Elder (page 61,) would have us believe, that "those pedobaptists who have conceded that baptize means invariably to immerse, were men of sanguine mind." It is not unusual however, for such men to make admissions against themselves, and we would beg the reader to refer to the admissions of *Wal*, *Tillotson*, *Secker*, *Taylor*, *Burnet*, *Campbell*, *Beza*, *Luther*, *Vitranga*, *Selden*, *Leighton*, in pages 114, 115, 116, 134, 138, 139, 140, 144, and say, whether these are to be regarded as the authority of men whose *heated blood* had so *blinded* them, that they could not see what made for their own side of the question. We say however, once for all, that it is such an examination as that of Professors *RIPLEY* and *STUART* which must *decide* the question. The weight of names cannot *alone* decide it: but surely such names as those we have adduced ought to stifle the censures of Pedobaptists against Baptists, and to produce in their minds great fear lest they are mistaken in a practice in which their own highest authorities desert them.

III. A fact which confirms all this testimony in proof of the early and long continued practice of immersion, is the former universal prevalence of baptistries of ample dimensions prepared evidently for the immersion of the whole person, which for centuries were attached to almost every place of worship, and some of which remain to the present day. For a particular

account of these, the reader may consult *Rees' Cyclopædia*, Article *Baptistry*.

On page 74, Mr. Elder hints that the ancient predictions that Jehovah would sprinkle many nations was fulfilled by the sprinkling of baptism. It was then very *imperfectly* fulfilled for the above quotations shew that the early christians were for many centuries immersed. He grossly mistakes the meaning of those predictions—*no critic of any authority* makes so gross a misinterpretation. And we may here mention in passing, that "the wonderful coincidence," which Mr. Elder discovers (p. 74,) between Moses sprinkling the Jews with blood and water, and the baptism of the 3000 on the day of Pentecost, may be a pretty theme for an ingenious fancy, but is too flimsy a notion to be treated as an *argument*.

IV. Since baptism is so clearly the original practice, the question naturally occurs how and when did sprinkling or pouring first arise? Let any one only bear in mind the perversion, already repeatedly noticed, which made external ordinances *essential* to salvation, and the answer is at hand. What, can no one go to heaven unless he be baptized and take the Lord's Supper? Then what will become of infants? They must surely be baptized also. What will become of sick and bedridden persons who cannot be plunged in the water? Something must be invented as like immersion as possible; they must have water poured all over them. Thus the practice commenced; and by and by, the scriptural method once set aside, it became, in the growth of corruption and disobedience, so much more *convenient* to sprinkle, that this practice was adopted altogether.

The first case of pouring instead of immersion that Dr. Wall can find, occurred in the third century, in the instance of Novatian, a Presbyter at Rome, (ii. 298,) over whom water was poured as he lay in his bed. But, at the time, it appears to have been considered imperfect baptism; for it was alleged apparently as *the reason* why he should not be made a bishop, that "it was not lawful for any over whom water had been poured in his bed during sickness, [*perichuthenta*,] to be admitted to any office of the clergy." The reason indeed for such objection Wall disputes; but when we advert to the gross corruptions which even then were beginning to pervert the pure and simple ordinance of Christ, it becomes of little moment to inquire how they thought of the practice of affusion. In this century, as we have already seen, (page 99,) the Lord's supper being considered essential to salvation was administered to infants. Mosheim tells us, also, that "the solemnity and pomp with which this important institution was celebrated, were considerably in-

creased ;" and speaking of baptism in this century, he informs us, " that none were admitted to this solemn ordinance, until, by the menacing and formidable shouts and declamation of the exorcist they had been delivered from the dominion of the Prince of Darkness, and consecrated to the service of God." And in the very next century, it appears from the same historian, that " the bread and wine were held up to view before their distribution, that they might be seen by the people, and contemplated with a certain religious respect ; and hence not long after, THE ADORATION OF THE SYMBOLS WAS UNQUESTIONABLY DERIVED." What indifferent guides were the *Fathers* whom some almost deify ; and how precious the principle which makes the Bible the sole guide of our faith and our practice !

V. While sprinkling and affusion, however, as we have seen from the foregoing quotations, obtained but little footing in the churches for *thirteen centuries*, the introduction of either practice was of still later date in England. Dr. Wall informs us, that " the offices or liturgies," " did all along," " enjoin dipping without any mention of pouring or sprinkling," until the second year of Edward VI. when the order was that the priest should *dip* the child in the water, with the addition however, that if it were weak it would suffice " to pour water upon it." And thus the matter stands, at the present day, for if the reader will turn to the form for the administration of infant baptism contained in the book of Common Prayer, he will find the following direction : " If they [the sponsors] shall certify him [' the Priest'] that the child may well endure it, he shall *dip* it in the water discreetly and warily, saying, &c." And in the form for adult baptism, is the following direction, " and then [' the Priest'] shall *dip* him in the water." It is added, " or pour water upon him," which words must evidently be of later origin than Edward VI.

VI. The reader has doubtless observed from the thorough examination made by Professors STUART and RIPLEY, as well as by the numerous concessions of pedobaptists, that there is no place to be found either in Scripture or classical Literature, in which there is even the slightest pretence to *pause* a moment on the question whether the word can have the sense of *pour*, *sprinkle*, *moisten*, or *apply water*. The case mentioned by Mr. Elder relating to Nebuchadnezzar, respects the Greek word *bapto* and not *baptizo*, which latter only is used in the new Testament to describe the ordinance of baptism : and in this use of *bapto*, which is the root from which *baptizo* is derived, the idea of immersion or dipping is still perfectly preserved. Mr.

Elder in his former letters (p. 41,) has completely answered himself on this point in his quotation from Milton,

“ ————— Yet a cold shuddering dew
Dips me all o'er.”

Nebuchadnezzar, in Dan. iv. 30, and Comus, in the passage quoted from Milton, are intended to be represented as so *drenched* in dew as to be (figuratively speaking) *dipped* in it. Who does not perceive that if the proper meaning of *dipped* in these cases be not preserved, the whole force and beauty of the passages is lost ?

VII. Now, every one must feel that the word chosen by the Saviour to describe his sacred ordinance, must mean something *certain*, otherwise it would give no intimation of his will in this respect. Whatever its meaning be, that meaning must be *definite* and *specific*. If, then, the *mode* of applying water had no intentional relation to the spiritual grace represented by the external symbol, the sign in such case might be expressed by *any word* signifying in general to *apply water*. But it is not pretended by learned pedobaptists themselves, that there is even a shadow of proof that *baptizo* is ever used in this *broad* signification. The only meaning of the word besides *immerse* or *overwhelm* on which Prof. Stuart relies, is that of *wash*. To *pour* and to *sprinkle*, are now abandoned by critics of any authority as significations of *baptizo*.

But, if, now, for the sake of argument, it should be admitted that the word *baptizo* means *wash*, then it ought to be so translated ; “ *washing* them in the name of the Father, &c.” “ They came to John and were *washed* of him in Jordan ;” “ I have need to be *washed* of thee and comest thou to me,” “ and as many as believed were *washed*, &c.” But if this be the meaning of the word, why was it not so rendered by the English translators of the Bible, and thus the matter set at rest, and why have the Dutch, the German, the Danish, as well as many other translations rendered it *immerse* ?

Besides, if *wash* be the signification of *baptizo*, this, too, has a *specific* sense ; do our pedobaptist brethren think they fulfil the Saviour's command in such case, by sprinkling a *few drops* of water, or only *moistening* a small part of the surface of the body ; Maimonides the Jewish Rabbi, according to Lightfoot, informs us, that “ Wheresoever in the law, washing of the body or garments is mentioned, it means nothing else, than the washing of the *whole* body. For if any wash himself all over except the very top of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness.” When our Saviour therefore commanded a *Jew* to *WASH*

another, it must of course be understood to mean a *complete* washing. This then would necessarily have been the ordinance of baptism. But this pedobaptists in these countries do not do; therefore, according to their own shewing, they do not obey the command of the Saviour.

Baptizo, however, does not mean *wash* but *immerse*. This is its *single, specific, certain* sense, and is therefore *descriptive* of that *form or rite* which the Saviour intended his disciples to observe; and while some object to our contending for a mere external rite; let it not be forgotten that *form* is that which is *essential* to an external rite; it is itself a *form*. Its form is that appointed by its founder; and if this form be not observed, the rite itself is *utterly lost*. What should we think of the Jews, if instead of *circumcision*, they had contented themselves with a mere *puncture*?

In fine, let it be remembered, that our Saviour was *immersed*, he commanded his apostles to *immerse*; they accordingly went forth *immersing* all who believed; and we beseech our reader, seriously to consider with himself whether he is not as much bound by obedience to his Saviour to be *immersed* in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as to *repent and believe the Gospel*. We say not that his salvation depends on this, unless he is *wilfully* disobedient; but will any real christian omit a known duty, commanded by his Saviour, and sanctioned by his example, merely because it is not a duty on which his *soul's* salvation depends? The salvation of the soul is not effected by baptism, but by faith, but may not wilful disobedience indicate a mind not yet reconciled to God? A mind in which there is in fact no saving faith?

VIII. On summing up the evidence of the scriptural *mode* of baptism now produced, the following is found to be the result.

1. The circumstances under which baptism took place in many instances in scripture, furnish the *strongest* probability that immersion was the method employed, and this is not *contradicted* in any case.

2. The use of the word *baptize* in other cases of which an unlearned reader may judge, shews that it *must* mean *plunge, overwhelm, immerse, or something akin to this*.

3. Paul, inspired by the Holy Ghost, alludes to the outward form of baptism as an *immersion* or *burial*, which, as an outward sign, represented the inward grace, which baptized persons ought previously to possess.

4. The most careful examination into the whole circle of classical Greek literature, as well as into the Septuagint, made

by learned *Pedobaptists* themselves, furnishes not a single instance of *baptizo* meaning any thing but *immerse* or *overwhelm*.

5. Not a single instance occurs either in the Apocrypha or New Testament, where the word can be shewn to have necessarily any other meaning than *immerse*.

6. Learned *pedobaptists* almost without number have acknowledged that *immerse* is the primary and proper meaning of *baptizo*, and many have admitted it to be its *only* meaning.

7. That *baptizo* means *immerse* only and specifically, appears by its being set in distinct *contrast* with other modes of applying water.

8. The whole Greek church with all its branches, comprising all the churches in the world that have never been under the influence of the Pope, always has practised and does now practice *immersion*; and regards this as the *only* meaning of the Greek word *baptizo*, the Greek being its native language.

9. All the versions of the scriptures ever made, wherein the word baptize when used in connection with the ordinance has been translated at all, have uniformly rendered it *immerse*.

10. History shews that the primitive Christians practised *immersion alone*; that this custom prevailed for *thirteen centuries* with few exceptions; and that the propriety of those was long doubted.

11. Baptistries for *immersing the whole person* were for many centuries attached to almost every place of worship.

12. Dr. Wall, Dr. Whitby, Luther, and other eminent *pedobaptists*, have wished for a restoration of the *primitive practice*, but yielded to the force of custom and effected no reformation.

13. The rubric of the Church of England to this day *enjoins immersion*, and *admits* pouring only in the case of sickness.

14. No other mode than immersion sets forth the meaning of the ordinance, or fulfils the design of the Saviour's appointment: This we shall shew more fully in the Third Part of this treatise.

PART THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

- I. DESIGN OF BAPTISM. II. EVILS OF INFANT BAPTISM. III. MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS. IV. BENEFITS OF BELIEVERS BAPTISM. V. OBJECTIONS ANSWERED. VI. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE.

The *design and use* of baptism, as illustrated by many passages of the New Testament, will be found to shed no little light on both branches of the preceding inquiry ; and we proceed, therefore, to shew, from the word of God, what appears to have been the purpose of the heavenly founder of this ordinance in some of the principle features of its design and benefits.

1. Baptism is a rite appointed to accompany the first open acknowledgement of faith in Christ. That this is the scriptural view of the ordinance, we gather from the fact that in the New Testament we always see it used in connection with the first public avowal made by the disciples of their Christian hope.—Such was the case under the ministry of John the Baptist, although, in this instance, the acknowledgement took the form of *repentance* rather than hope, on account, probably, of the still imperfect view which was as yet obtained of the Gospel salvation. “ They were baptized in Jordan confessing their sins :—such was the case under the immediate ministry of the Saviour himself ; for the expression “ Jesus made and baptized—disciples,” shews that baptism stood in immediate connection with *becoming a disciple*. The same appears from the baptism of the 3000 on the day of Pentecost, who immediately on “ *gladly receiving the word*,” were baptized, and indeed, from every other example of baptism recorded in Scripture: the same might be shewn also from a multitude of other passages. Now, it is evident that baptism administered to an infant cannot fulfil the design of the ordinance as an avowal of faith in Christ. Hence arose the

absurd practice used in some churches, of asking an unconscious babe if it repents and believes, and getting a grown person to answer for it.

2. Baptism, then, being a rite accompanying the first open avowal of christian faith and hope, becomes of course a *sign of salvation*. This is distinctly indicated in that passage in 1. Pet. iii. 21, which has been already repeatedly alluded to, "the like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us, not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God." The allusion is to Noah and his family; as they were saved by the water of the flood, so Christians are saved by the water of baptism; with this difference, however, that the flood actually saved the former, by bearing them up in the ark; while baptism only *figuratively* saves Christians, inasmuch as it is a sign of "the answer of a good conscience towards God," the inward grace in the heart; this is the *real*, the *positive effect of salvation*, of which baptism is only the outward sign or symbol. The allusion here made to baptism by the apostle, is the figure of speech called *metonymy*, where the sign is put for the thing signified.

In both views now named, of a *public avowal of faith in Christ*, and a *sign of salvation*, the Saviour adverts to the ordinance in his interview with Nicodemus, John iii. 5. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of WATER and of the spirit, he cannot ENTER INTO the kingdom of God."

That our Saviour could not intend in this passage to allude to baptism as possessing any saving efficacy in itself, is apparent from the passage in 1. Peter already alluded to, "*not the washing away the filth of the flesh*"—from innumerable passages in the New Testament, which represent salvation as dependant not "*on works*," not on any external observance of ours, but *on the work of Christ alone*, through faith in that work—from the general character of the instructions of the Saviour himself, which tended to draw away the confidence of his hearers from mere outward religion, and to shew them the necessity of worshipping God as "*a Spirit*," "*in spirit and in truth*"—and, indeed, from the whole current and tenor of the New Testament scriptures from beginning to end. This is now acknowledged as a fundamental principle by all *evangelical* Protestants, without distinction of name or sect. This truth then being admitted, we must of course seek, in the words *born of water*, some sense that will comport with the natural meaning of the words themselves, as well as with the nature of christianity. We conceive that what has already been shewn, from other parts of scrip-

ture, concerning the *design* of baptism, will sufficiently explain the Saviour's meaning in this passage. Baptism was the appointed solemnity accompanying an open avowal of faith in Christ, and, as such, stood as a sign or symbol of that salvation which all obtain through faith; and none but those who possessed that change of heart which would render them willing "to confess Christ before men,"—willing to make an open avowal of their faith in him,—could be real believers, could possess salvation. How appropriate, then, was the Saviour's address to the cowardly Nicodemus who crept to a concealed interview "by night." He knew, of course, that multitudes more manly and honest than he, had not feared to confess the Saviour openly, and to be baptized, in public testimony of their attachment; he believed that Christ was "a teacher come from God," and yet he shrunk away from a courageous avowal of his conviction; such a temper unless quelled and overcome, would forever unfit Nicodemus for an entrance into the kingdom of heaven, either in its *spiritual* blessings, or its *external* privileges; and hence the Saviour, with great faithfulness, set before him what he needed, in order to admission into that kingdom of God, foretold by Daniel, and for which this ruler of the Jews was, doubtless, like the rest of his countrymen, looking with intense anxiety; "unless he were born of water and of the spirit,"—unless he came to possess that pure heart which God's spirit creates, and which would prompt him with fortitude to avow publicly his faith by the appointed ordinance of baptism, the outward sign of that inward grace—he could never see or enter the expected kingdom of God, could never know inward peace of mind, nor obtain the joy which "passes understanding;" could never be entitled to be received into communion with christian disciples. Here, then, the Saviour places together *the sign* and *the thing signified*, because the one was appointed as the authorised mode of avowing the possession of the other, and was in a great measure a *test* of its existence. Dr. Doddridge's paraphrase on this passage is not inconsistent with this explanation; "whosoever," says he, "would become a regular member of it, [that is the kingdom of God,] must not only be baptized, but as ever he desires to share in its spiritual and eternal blessings, he must experience the renewing and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit on his soul." See also Kuinoel on the passage.

3. Baptism being thus appointed as a sign of Salvation, it is of course to be expected that there shall be some *analogy* or *resemblance* between the sign and the thing signified; accordingly scripture shews such a resemblance subsisting in two

main points, *first* in respect to the cleansing effect of water, which *resembles*, and therefore *represents* or *signifies*, the cleansing influence of the spirit on the heart ; and *secondly* in respect to the *mode* of baptism which is an immersion or burial in the water ; and is therefore *analogous* to that spiritual change of character obtained through faith in Christ, which as Prof. Neander expresses it, is a *merging of the whole man into a new spirit and life*.

The *first* of these points of resemblance between baptism as the outward sign, and the inward grace it signifies, is noticed in such passages as this, Acts xxii. 16. " Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins."

The *second* point of resemblance, above named, has already been sufficiently adverted to, in discussing the import of Rom. vi. 3, 4. and Col. ii. 12.

4. From what is now said, it plainly follows, that infant baptism, and sprinkling or pouring, wholly *divert* the sacred ordinance of baptism from its original design, and *defeat* the purpose of the Saviour. For *first*, sprinkling or pouring *destroys* the *resemblance* which the Saviour *intended* between the outward sign and the thing signified: there is no resemblance between a little water sprinkled, and the *merging of the whole man into a new spirit and life* ; there is none to that complete purifying change which those undergo who are *washed* and *sanctified* by the spirit.

Secondly, baptism was intended as a solemn act whereby Christians should personally *avow* their faith in the Redeemer.—It was consequently, *never designed for infants*. It cannot apply to their condition. When administered to them, therefore, it is a *desecration of the ordinance* ; and although the Lord, in his mercy, bears with the ignorance or mistake of those who do so, yet we cannot believe that He approves the act. Mr. Elder in Letter ix. at some length labours to shew the benefits derived from infant baptism ! These are all purely *imaginary* ; an ingenious fancy might write a volume in the same style ; what he there says is *unsustained* by a single passage in God's word ; just in the same way they reasoned about the introduction of all the errors that at length effaced the Christian character of what was called the church of Christ, until it became in fact Anti-christ. Just so the Romanists now reason about such of those ancient errors as they retain : The principle itself which will lead a man to establish, by merely human fancy (for it is mis-called reason) what is unsustained by revelation, and indeed opposed to it, if carried out, would be *subversive of all truth*.

It ought then, to be enough for a sincere christian to know that infant baptism is not found in the word of God, to induce him to abandon it. To practice it, is plainly to be guilty of "*adding to the things*" written in the book of Divine Revelation, and although pardonable, as before said, from ignorance or mistake in those that thus practise, *it cannot be right.*

While we say this, however, it requires very little discernment to perceive that we must not expect a specific divine warrant for every *trifling* matter. To add a rite like infant baptism to the pure and simple model which Christ left for his church is surely a *serious* matter to do without warrant ; it is *not* a trifling matter. In ancient days they *added* milk and honey to baptism ; then gave the *Lord's Supper* to infants, then, they held up the bread and wine to be *surveyed*, as Mosheim says, with a sort of religious respect ; then,—they *adored* them !

But say some, what *warrant* have you for *females* partaking of the Lord's supper. We reply, as much warrant as can possibly be necessary in such a case, first *the principle* that "all [believers] are one in Christ ;" that there is now no distinction as under the Mosaic economy of male and female : Secondly the known *practice* ; men and women were baptized, and men and women composed the church at Corinth, to whom without distinction the apostle Paul addresses instructions as to the proper mode of partaking of the ordinance. Besides, the words of our Saviour, "this do as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me," addressed personally to the apostles alone, were evidently understood to extend to *the disciples* generally, and it will not be doubted that women were disciples, for Tabitha is expressly called a disciple in Acts ix. 36 ; and lastly, among many other considerations that might be named, women must evidently be included, in Acts ii. 44, 45, where it said that "ALL that believed were together — BREAKING BREAD from house to house."

II. While however we cannot argue for new rites from benefits which we *imagine* may result from them, we need no particular proof to know that what is contrary to scripture must be *evil*. We have not far to look for the evils, the fearfully dangerous consequences of infant baptism.

1. It has entirely *supplanted* and *destroyed* the ordinance which the Saviour appointed. Where infant baptism and sprinkling or pouring are practised, in a little while all become, as they suppose, baptized in this way, and the scriptural ordinance is utterly lost sight of. Our Lord as we have seen, appointed this ordinance for a specific purpose, it was to be the first open and

solemn profession of *faith* in him ; and its form, *immersion*, by the copious and complete ablution this occasions, was intended to represent the abundance of the cleansing gifts of divine grace, and also the death to sin and new birth to righteousness of the believer. Now we put it to our pedobaptist friends to say whether *this design* of the Saviour is not, so far as their practice extends, completely frustrated and driven out of the church of Christ.

And yet so strong is the argument for adhering to the *design* of the Saviour, that we find many pedobaptists themselves in fact giving up the whole matter in dispute respecting immersion, in their admissions on this score. Let the reader refer for instance to Dr. Wall. In vol. iii. 350, he is forced to acknowledge that "The baptism of an infant cannot have all the solemnity which that of an adult person may have ;" and again "The immersion of the person — in the posture of one that is buried and raised up again, is much more solemn, and EXPRESSES THE DESIGN of the sacrament, the mystery of the spiritual washing, MUCH BETTER than pouring a small quantity of water on the face." And a little below he adds, "If it be done in the church, in or at the font, and the congregation do join in the prayers there used, it is *much more solemn* than in a bed-chamber, out of a bason, a tea cup, or a punch bowl." We cannot refrain, here, from again adverting to the sentiment of Professor Neander quoted above. "This form" says he [immersion] "was doubtless BEST ADAPTED to express that which CHRIST INTENDED to express by this symbol, the MERGING of the whole man into a new spirit and life." Luther, too, as we have seen, expressly acknowledges of the form immersion, that *without doubt it was instituted by Christ*. Our readers will remember how nearly like this are the sentiments also of Barrow, Taylor, Whitby, and others already quoted, and to these very many other pedobaptists might be added on the same point ; so that we are constrained to enquire whether we can possibly be justified in omitting that which Christ ENJOINED, and which expresses much better HIS DESIGN in his own ordinance, on any account, or reasoning, or pretence whatever ? Christ's appointment and design we see by the admission of pedobaptists themselves, is not adhered to in their practice, and in the Saviour's sense of the word, therefore, they are *not baptized*.

2. But, another and most disastrous consequence of infant baptism, has been the admission into the church of vast multitudes of persons without repentance, without faith, without any religious character. That "all men have not faith," is the testimony of the word of God, all evangelical Christians admit

the natural depravity of the human heart, which no external rite, baptism or any other, can wash away ; and all persons of every class, who have any observation, cannot but perceive that, baptized or unbaptized, infants, from their earliest years, give evidence that they have not exactly the tempers of angels ; that they, in fact, possess an evil tendency, which in spite of all the admonitions or example of friends, and all the force of the most careful religious instruction, public and private, in a great majority of instances, leads them to prefer and practise sin ; in a variety of ways, to break God's laws rather than to love and obey them. By baptizing infants, therefore, you introduce into the church persons of whom the greater part will certainly turn out to be unworthy members of it ; nevertheless, they have the *rights* of members ; they have the *name* of Christians ; they will not be easily ousted of their privileges ; they will form their own opinion of doctrines ; will be ready to hail with joy those who explain away unpleasant truths ; will give a tone to what is called christian society ; until at last real religion may be sought for almost in vain. Who can fail to perceive that such was the course of things, so soon as infant baptism was introduced into the church ? It came, indeed, in company with infant communion and other errors ; but it wrought together with those other errors to produce the downfall of real religion : and what evangelical christian can fail to perceive that this is the present condition of many communities professedly religious, where the few pious persons among them are constantly mourning the worldly character of the churches to which they belong ?

In the sixteenth century, there was some reform of these abuses : still the reformers retained infant baptism ; and accordingly in the Established Churches of England and Scotland, as well as in those of Denmark, Sweden, Prussia, Geneva, and the other Swiss and German Protestant states, there soon began a rapid declension that reduced them almost to a level with those of Romish Governments ; nay, in many instances, below them ; so that now it is a gross absurdity to call any of these *churches* ; they are *not* churches in the scriptural sense of the word ; they are *nations* among whom there may or not be, as it happens, a thin *sprinkling* of christians ; but it is seriously to be doubted whether there is to be found in any one of those states in connection with what are called their *Established Churches*, *ANY ONE* society answerable to the description in the nineteenth article of religion in the Book of Common Prayer, "*a congregation of faithful men.*" On the contrary, wherever Evangelical sentiments become embraced, they are *denounced*

by the majority of these *soi disant* churches ; and the professors of them *derided* if not persecuted as *enthusiasts*.

This we say is the *self evident, unavoidable* effect of baptizing infants ; the only escape from it is to adopt the principle of the Baptist and Independant or Congregational churches, in England and America, as well as the Presbyterian churches in the latter country, and admit none to *communion* except those who *repent and believe*. But, except on Baptist principles, how inconsistent is such practice ! An infant is baptized as " a member of Christ's church ;" but it is not admitted to the Lord's supper *even when old enough voluntarily to partake of it* ; such person is thenceforward *never* recognized as a Christian, until having attained to some years, he gives evidence of repentance and faith. Thus our Congregational and Presbyterian brethren *unchurch* with one hand those whom they *introduced* with the other. Still, we admit, this error is better than the extravagance of the *Popish* sentiment retained in the Catechism in the Book of Common Prayer, in compliance with which thousands of poor little children are continually compelled to utter the *enormous falsehood*, that in baptism " they were *MADE* members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven." In such a state of things as is seen in many of the communities to which we have now alluded, no *duty* is louder and more imperious than that of *separation*.

3. Another injurious effect of infant baptism is the deception which it practises on the souls of men. They rely on their baptism when they ought to rely on Christ. Deep is the delusion to which the human mind is easily subjected ; " the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ;" once supply a man with such a prop as the benefits of his infant baptism, which *made* him, (oh awful error !) " a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven ;" and it will be found hard indeed to tear it from him. Say not, this is an abuse, and therefore no argument against the use of the practice. The practice is unsustained by scripture, it is an invention of men, and therefore on its own head be all its abuses.

III. Some miscellaneous remarks, for which there has hitherto been no opportunity, may be added here.

1. Mr. Elder closes his very flimsy account of baptism *succeeding* circumcision, by calling it the seal of the new covenant, and this he again asserts it to be, in page 78. We do not know of any passage of scripture which so represents it, and if there were, it would make *against* him ; a seal is confirmatory of a contract *already made*, in like manner as circumcision to *Abra-*

ham confirmed the *contract* of which his faith was the condition. Baptism to be such a seal can only be administered to *believers*.

2. In pages 78 and 80, Mr. Elder is quite amazed at the strong proof that sprinkling is the proper mode of baptism, which he thinks he derives from the circumstance, that blood and water were sprinkled of old under the Mosaic economy ; and that the Holy Ghost is often said to be *poured out*, and *shed down upon us* ; Mr. Elder adds *sprinkled* ; but we confess ourselves utterly at a loss to find any instance in the word of God where the Holy Ghost is said to be *sprinkled* on men. Ludicrous however as such notions are, we shall endeavour if possible to dismiss them with a grave reply.

First, as to blood and water being sprinkled : any one can perceive, that the *nature of things* made it impossible to use the blood of a victim in any other way, both on account of the smallness of its quantity, and the loathsomeness of any object wholly dipped in blood. It was of necessity therefore sprinkled ; and being thus used, water was some times sprinkled together with the blood, to indicate, apparently, the cleansing influence of the blood of atonement on the heart and conscience of a believer.

Secondly. Pouring in the case of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is the image which the nature of things unavoidably suggests. God is in Heaven above ; we are on the earth beneath ; the gifts of God, therefore, are said to *come down*, to be *poured forth* ; but though this is the image we naturally adopt when speaking of the *bestowment* of these gifts, we are by no means confined to that, when we would speak of our actual *enjoyment* of them ; hence though we say that the Holy Spirit is poured on men, when we mean to speak of the coming of the gift ; it is nevertheless perfectly in agreement with the usage of language to say, they are *surrounded by* or *immersed in* the Holy Spirit, when speaking of their *possession* of the blessings. And still more proper is the expression when the mind is directed to the purifying influence of the spirit of God ; for in like manner as we would bathe any object we desire thoroughly to cleanse, in abundance of water, so may one, purified by the spirit of God, be aptly said to be *plunged in a flood*, *bathed in a fountain*, &c. and hence baptism being significant of a thorough purifying of the heart and soul of man, is itself a *plunging* or *bathing* of the person in abundance of water.

Mr. Elder concludes his remarks on this head by informing us, that from what he has said, it appears evident that "pouring and sprinkling represents the thing signified by baptism."

much better than immersion, and consequently that these are the *most proper* modes of baptism. When a man is making a *desperate* push, his courage may be in proportion to his daring! Mr. Elder is certainly courageous in bold assertions : we are however a little at a loss, here, to know what has become of his profound submission to the learned. In page 66, he asks, if we can have no confidence in such men as Calvin, Luther, Beza, and a number more, in whom shall we have confidence, shall we say, as David did in his haste, "all men are liars?" Alas ! how soon has Mr. Elder forgotten his own principle ! Luther, Calvin, Beza, as we have seen, all testify to *immersion* as the *most proper* mode of baptism—for they allow it to have been the *original* mode ; and Luther especially, besides many others declares that, that mode *ought to be observed now*, (see page 139) ; the learned Professor Nerler, of the University of Berlin, gives us his candid and disinterested belief that immersion was the original mode, and "*best adapted*," (these are his very words,) to express what Christ intended to express by this symbol, (see page 103) ; and the learned Dr. Wall, as we have also seen, distinctly declares his conviction that "*immersion*" is "*much more solemn*," and "*expresses the design of the sacrament*" "*much better*." These are all *pedobaptists*, learned men, some of them *champions* of their party ; there may be adduced a host of others to support them ; and yet, wonderful to relate, they all, *all* failed to discover that sprinkling or pouring expresses the meaning of the ordinance *much better*—is the *most proper* mode of baptism.

IV. We have stated in the first part of this chapter the scriptural *design* of baptism, as proved in the words of the New Testament, in which we have confined ourselves to what appears most essential ; there are however other obvious *uses*, consequent on what has already been shewn, which, therefore, ought to be regarded as a *part of the design*. Some of these may here be noted.

1. It is of great use as an *unreserved and public pledge on the part of a believer that he is "on the Lord's side."* There is a strong propensity in the human heart to shrink from trial and difficulty ; to escape the burthen of "the cross," and it is vastly easier, men are apt to think, to be christians privately and quietly, without observation, than openly to confess their master, and challenge thereby the eye, and the opposition, and, perhaps, the persecution of others. But they mistake ; this covert hidden religion is oftentimes no better than that of Nicodemus ; that christianity is not worth much, which is not ready

to suffer, and endure shame and reproach for Christ's sake; "he that denieth me before men," says the Saviour, "shall be denied before the angels of God." How admirably is the ordinance of baptism calculated to tear up this coward disposition by the root. It is a *first* duty. It *must* be performed. It consists of a public pledge of our hopes and our obligations, and while therefore it makes no allowance for the very weakest to plead their timidity, for the command is peremptory; it affords, at the same time, strength in its very performance, for he who has once thus openly professed his hope and faith in Christ, has *run the gauntlet* with the world; he cannot now be equally tempted to hide himself from observation, for the very act of baptism has made that impossible. *Pedobaptism has robbed the ordinance of this advantage.*

2. It makes a *decisive boundary between the church and the world.* Enemies will infest the church, who have "crept in unawares," notwithstanding all the guards and caution that can be used: how much more, then, will she be exposed to such secret invasion, if she throws down her walls, destroys her ramparts, and obliterates her boundaries. Baptism forms one of these boundaries. It is in fact one of the strong "munitions" of Zion. The majority of men will pause before they make so open a profession of christian faith and hope, as baptism requires, without possessing them, while it never would shock them, however unworthy, to *steal unobserved* into the church; to seat themselves *quietly* amongst her members; and *partake* of her holiest rites. The reason of this appears to be that men, unless truly "converted" to God, and then possessed of much "grace," more easily quail under the eye of a fellow being, than under the eye of God: *faith* alone reveals the presence and the penetrating eye of Jehovah. But there is far less notice taken of a man who melts into a multitude that approach the sanctuary, or the table, of the Lord, than of one who goes down *alone* into the baptismal water, into the font, the river, or the lake, in presence of the "great congregation," and while that ordinance *alone* in all its simple yet solemn beauty and majesty invites every eye, devotes himself to Christ. *This bulwark of Zion, also, Pedobaptism has utterly destroyed.*

V. Thus it appears, that baptism was appointed by the Saviour for the wisest and most beneficial ends. It is not the part of one redeemed by that blood to suggest, as an objection, the *difficulties* in the way of performing it. If it can be *disproved*, it is needless to talk of its difficulties. If it cannot, shall these prevent our obedience to the law of Christ?

1. Much misconception, however, exists on the score of

difficulties. Cases may exist, of course, in which, from sickness, or perfect solitude as to *christian* society, it is *impossible* to perform the ordinance. Do those who make this an objection forget, that where *God* in His providence has made the performance of this rite impossible, the guilt of neglect *cannot* be charged against such as on *this* account are not baptized? *God expects* not impossibilities. In those cases, too, where sickness makes it, if not impossible, yet obviously dangerous; he must be ill instructed in the school of Christ, who fails to perceive that the divine rule applicable here, is this, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." If water, too, cannot be procured, a case surely of very rare occurrence; this is, still, a *providential* interference. It is quite possible that circumstances might render it impracticable to obtain either wine or bread, for the *Lord's Supper*; should we therefore be justified in substituting any thing else? Mr. West, a missionary in the North West country, mentions a whole winter in which the people of the station were destitute of every species of vegetable; meat and water were their only diet: would any one in such a case substitute meat for bread? The objections which are raised on such grounds as these, arise, generally, from that perverted view of Christianity, which represents salvation as *dependent* on external ordinances; and, sometimes, we fear, are resorted to by those, who, not being very delicate as to the modes by which they will sustain their party, are ready to seize on these imaginary difficulties as offering a shew of plausibility. As to Mr. Elder's remark respecting the Halifax Church formerly baptizing at a distance from their place of worship, we only say, that he knows Halifax too well not to be aware, that any number of persons might, without difficulty, be baptized at many of our wharfs, were it not that the riotous behaviour of a *pedobaptist* mob has hitherto made it unpleasant to do so. The Jews had no hereditary prejudices against immersion, and made no riots on baptismal occasions. One would think that such objections ought to be silenced forever by the fact, that *all christians* in the world, except in those countries which have felt the Papal influence, constantly practise immersion, and that the baptism invariably practised by 4000 Baptist churches in the United States, besides many in England, and in these Provinces, is the immersion of adults, in which no difficulty whatever is found.

2. As difficulties ought never to be named as an objection to the performance of an ordinance of Christ, so ought we carefully to avoid any argument *ad invidiam*, any appeal to the passions, to justify our dispensing with the appointment of the

Saviour. It is a very common thing, however, to attempt to hold up the sentiments of baptists to dislike and reproach, because they practise what is commonly called *close communion*; that is, they receive at the Lord's supper none but *baptized persons*. Now it ought to be remembered, that the institution of baptism, as a rite whereby christian disciples should be admitted into the visible church, was the act of the Saviour himself; and that he appointed it *in the form and for the persons we have already sufficiently described in this treatise: His Baptism then, is the immersion of believers*: the sprinkling of infants is a late invention: it is no where found in the word of God; in our judgment, and, as we think, in the judgment of the scriptures, it is *not baptism*. To receive persons therefore without any other baptism than this, would be in fact to receive to the communion *unbaptized persons*. How can we consistently do this? Baptists do not act on any different *principle* from any other christians in this respect; what christian church is known to exist, which admits the ordinance of baptism to have any *present and binding* force, and yet will receive to the Lord's supper those whom it believes to be unbaptized? There is not one. Say not it is hard, it is uncharitable; this is merely the argument *ad invidiam*; it has no force; obedience to Christ ought never to be regarded as a hardship; and charity can not be tested in this way; it is a feeling of the heart, which surely may exist, although our conformity to scriptural principles may be unpleasant to others; we *love* other christians though we cannot ask them *until baptized* to approach the table of the Lord.

But then, it is said other christians may conscientiously *think* themselves baptized when sprinkled in infancy. Perhaps they may; but *their* conscience is not *our* conscience; "let every man be thoroughly persuaded in his *own* mind." Baptists are conscientiously bound to preserve in their churches that discipline which to them appears the discipline ordained of Christ. Those pedobaptists do not *seem* to shew a very high veneration for the sacredness of conscience who blame them for acting thus.

Besides, it should be remembered, that *all* men are not conscientious; there are, perhaps, always some in baptist congregations who deal not faithfully with themselves—who allow themselves to be deterred from a candid examination of their duty as respects baptism, by various motives of shame, or fear, or interest; there may be many of the same sort in *pedobaptist* congregations; and how, then, shall a baptist church or minister distinguish between those who are conscientious, and those who are not? And if they undertook to do so, how disorderly

an appearance would it have, to apply one rule to one person, and a different rule to another. We see then the necessity of adhering to the rules of the Saviour ; they alone will guide us safely, they alone will really promote the prosperity of the church.

It grieves baptists that pious pedobaptists will not be baptized as their Saviour was, and so become entitled to perfect fellowship with them in all the ordinances of God's house ; and in all other matters of christian courtesy and affection they rejoice to shew them the highest respect and regard. They are always ready, let Mr. Elder say what he may to the contrary, to meet them in associations for prayer, to listen to the public instructions of their ministers, on all suitable occasions, either in baptist or pedobaptist pulpits ; to unite with them most cordially in every measure calculated to promote the " general interests of Zion ;" such has been the experience of the writer, on an extensive acquaintance with baptists, not only in this province, but in England and America ; and that such is the case in *this* community we confidently appeal to the public to attest : as individuals we make *no* difference between any that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity ; our hearts and our hands are open to them always ; only, in matters of church discipline, we cannot, we *dare not*, imitate the general laxity of principle and practice, but feel, that our imperious duty is to recognize, as members of Christ's *visible* church, none but those who, having repented of their sins, and believed in Christ, have *thereupon* been baptized ; that is, as we have fully shewn, been *bathed in water*, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

3. Another objection, sometimes made against baptism of believers, is the difficulty of ascertaining *who really believe* ; and if we *mistake*, by supposing a man who is baptized to be a real believer when he is *not* so, and faith be an indispensable prerequisite for baptism, then, such person, on our principles, it is supposed, is not baptized. But this inference is an entire mistake. It receives a brief and complete answer by referring to the scriptures. We there see baptism administered to those who *in the judgment of the apostles, and other administrators of the ordinance*, at the time, were possessed of faith—gladly received the word,—repented of their sins ; and we *never* read there of those who afterwards went out from them, because they were not of them—or who fell subsequently into sin ; being baptized *again* on their repentance and return. We act in conformity with this model. We baptize those who in *our best judgment* are possessed of faith, using all means which God

has put into the hands of fallible men, with all tenderness and charity, to obtain a right judgment. It is an important, solemn duty ; it demands watchfulness, prayer, and much christian love ; but surely, it is not, on that account, to be neglected ; it can never be an argument against scriptural baptism, that it demands the exercise of much christian wisdom, and temper, in order to use it according to Christ's appointment—what step in the christian course does not demand the same ?

4. Again it is often stated as an objection against adult baptism, and this we perceive has been adopted by Mr. Elder, that it leaves infants in a worse condition under the *Christian* than they were under the *Jewish* dispensation. This too, rests on an entire mistake. As well might we argue, that we are *generally* in a worse situation than the Jews, because we have no longer *any* of the numerous rites and ceremonies of their law. Christ has determined *that* to be a better state of things, in which only those possessed of spiritual religion shall be members of his visible church, with the *simple* rites of *believer's baptism* and the *Lord's supper*, *unincumbered* with any other observances. But he has not only *determined* it to be better ; it is *easy to see* it is better. Rites and ceremonies are apt to steal away the heart from genuine religion ; and therefore none are appointed in the christian church, but such as require the previous *possession* of genuine religion, and which are too simple to be perverted without destroying their very essence.

Besides, the idea of infants being in a worse condition, of course, supposes, that there must be some *benefit* in infant baptism, but God only can confer a benefit on *any* external rite, which makes it necessary first to prove that he has appointed it, otherwise it must be *contrary* to his will.

Probably these who reason in this manner are carried away by the vague idea that *circumcision* conferred some important *spiritual* benefit on children. But as we have already shewn in the first part of this treatise, it conferred none whatever on them, except that as members of Israel they enjoyed the common public religious advantages. Circumcision conferred no personal religious advantage ; it did not save the soul of the infant ; it did not destroy its original depravity ; it did not increase the obligations of the parents to instruct their children ; if it had conferred any of these privileges, what was the condition of the poor females, for they were not circumcised, and were left without any analogous rite ?

So in like manner we say of infant baptism, it confers no personal spiritual advantage on an infant ; it *saves* not its soul ; it

destroys not its original depravity; it increases not the obligations of parents; while on the other hand, by banishing the rite of believer's baptism, it actually does deprive professing christians of a positive advantage; for though baptism cannot save their souls, yet it is oftentimes unquestionably a means of strengthening their faith and increasing their joy. Infant baptism, too, deprives the church of an important advantage, for the solemn nature of the ordinance preaches powerfully to the conscience, and, accordingly, baptists can speak with confidence of innumerable instances of conversion attributable to the *eloquence* of this ordinance.

We say, then, that *infant* baptism imposes no increased obligations on parents to instruct and pray for their children, nor does *believer's* baptism lessen the weight of any. On the contrary, a church, composed of really religious persons, as believer's baptism must require and imply, is far *more* likely to feel the weight of those obligations which demand the utmost attention to the youthful offspring of its members, than can possibly be the case with one which makes *infant baptism*, and not *faith and piety*, the test of membership.

Most unjust, therefore, is the insinuation sometimes made against baptists, that they disregard the religious education of their children. Because they do not baptize them unless they repent and believe, people have *blindly* inferred that they neglected them; while the fact is, that their principles necessarily add weight to the responsibility of parents, by requiring first, the possession of that principle of real piety without which no obligations are rightly regarded.

In conclusion we would repeat, what has been observed before, that the condition of infants in relation to a future state is *now* what it has *always* been. Although the scriptures reveal the truth, which experience sadly confirms, of the depraved natures they inherit, yet nothing is discovered in the word of God of a future judgment, except that which is passed on the "deeds done in the body;" an infant cannot be said to perform moral actions; there can, therefore, be no such future judgment to an infant; and hence we conclude, that all who die in infancy are saved; a belief which we might support also by several passages of scripture: but it is plain, that their salvation must be different in many respects from that of one capable of *faith*; they are saved without trial, without repentance, without faith—is it too much then to believe that they can be saved without baptism? Will pedobaptists exalt the importance of their favorite rite above that of probation—of faith—of repentance?

VI. Having already given on page 150 a summary of the proofs of immersion being the only scriptural and proper mode of baptism ; we now give in like manner a condensed view of the evidence which shews infant baptism to be *unscriptural* and improper, and the *immersion of professed believers* to be the only baptism appointed by the Saviour.

1. There is *no other* baptism found in any part of the sacred scriptures but adult baptism : although,

2. *The instances of baptism are numerous.* John's baptism was that of *adults only*. The Saviour himself was baptized as an *adult*. The apostles baptized *none other*. The 3000 on the day of Pentecost, and the 5000 soon after, were *believers*. The *multitudes* baptized at Samaria were *men and women*, and so, in *every other case* mentioned in the Bible.

3. If infant baptism had been then practised, there *must have been* infants baptized on most of these occasions ; and if so there is the highest *improbability*, that they would not be mentioned in some of them, but they are no where mentioned :

4. Not *even* when *men and women* are specifically named : and yet,

5. Children are almost invariably *mentioned* in scripture where they are really parties in any transaction.

6. The baptism of the Saviour who was himself *not immersed as an infant*, but as a *voluntary agent*, in the performance of a *personal duty*, inasmuch as its sole benefit was, not for himself, but for us, in the way of *example*, must be regarded as a striking and *authoritative model* of the ordinance he intended to appoint.

7. There is not in the New Testament the *most distant allusion* to such a practice as infant baptism ; although the epistles advert to almost *every relation* of life.

8. All the endeavours to infer infant baptism from cases in which it is alleged it *probably* was used, utterly fail under a thorough examination.

9. Infant baptism *cannot be proved* from *circumcision*, or the supposed *sameness of the churches* ; circumcision being a *Jewish*, not a *Christian* rite ; and the Jewish and Christian churches not being in any respect the same, either in their ordinances or the qualification of their members.

10. Any other baptism than that of professed believers is utterly *inconsistent with the spiritual character* of the church of Christ, as foretold in the Old Testament and stated in the New.

11. History shews *infant baptism* to have been an *innovation* together with *infant communion*, and a multitude of other errors, both in doctrine and practice.

12. No proof appears of infant baptism being *universal*, until many centuries after the apostles.

13. There is reason to believe that there always have been christians who practised believers' baptism *only*, for such existed among the persecuted Waldenses whose origin is too early to be traced.

14. Many learned *pedobaptists* who have had the best possible opportunities of examining ancient historical records, admit that infant baptism was not an apostolic practice.

15. Any other baptism than that of believers would render our obedience to a command of Christ dependant on an uncertainty ; for, no one baptized only in infancy can ever *know* certainly that he has been baptized ; and in many cases even the testimony of others to the fact is lost.

16. The *design* of baptism as a public avowal of faith in Christ, and a sign of the copious gifts of the Holy Ghost, and of the believer's "death unto sin," can be fulfilled in *no other way* than the *immersion in water of professed believers*.

We know well how slow the mind is to quit a position, endeared to us by education, by hereditary attachment, by the opinions and wishes of our friends ; one, too, the preservation of which is necessary in order to save us from contempt and reproach ; and strong as the evidence now produced in support of scriptural baptism must by many, we doubt not, be felt to be, there will be, nevertheless, we are aware, in many minds, great vacillation ; and the *slightest* grounds, almost, will be deemed sufficient to justify their continuance on the side of old attachments and prejudices.

Perhaps some, impressed with the decisive tone of the concessions of learned *pedobaptists* themselves, will nevertheless conclude that, if so many learned and pious men have erred, surely, the *error* must be a *safe* one. But alas ! shall this be the reasoning of a christian ? Can any error be safely indulged in, because another fallible mortal has indulged in it ? Again, it may be thought, that there *must* be sufficient grounds to justify the practice of infant baptism, and the neglect of immersion, inasmuch as the very persons who made such distinct admissions on both points, continued nevertheless, to administer the rite to infants, and by sprinkling instead of immersion. Here, we might still answer, we are not tried by the light that *others* have, but by that *we* have ; what is the decision to which *our* minds must come upon the evidence before us ? It is *according to that evidence* our Saviour requires us to walk.

But, moreover, let the *contrariety* of reasons assigned by these *pedobaptist* authorities for retaining their practice, testify the inexpediency of taking them as our guides. With respect to the practice of *immersion*, one, like *Dr. Doddridge*, evades the duty, by persuading himself it was proper enough for *warm* countries, but cannot be needful in these cold climates. Another, like *Mr. Stackhouse*, (see *Booth* i. 195,) thinks that concession may be made to "the *prevalence of custom and the overfondness of parents*." *Dr. Wall*, though evidently indignant at the degenerate basons which have usurped the place of the noble baptistry, must still contend that *pouring* is not wrong, because he thinks baptize may mean wash, though *immerse*, he acknowledges, is *more proper*; while *Dr. Whitby* avowed the *popish* character of the arguments used to retain sprinkling, and remained a beneficed clergyman of the church of England! It is for the reader to determine whether he can conscientiously imitate their conduct.*

Let it not be said that we deal unfairly with the *pedobaptists* from whom we have quoted; we admit, that, on various pretences they continued to neglect the practice of immersion—we admit, that in many instances, doubtless, these *pretences* seemed to them *satisfactory grounds*—does this lessen the force

* That the grounds on which learned *pedobaptists* have adopted *infant baptism* are no less various will appear from the following extract; (*Scripture Guide*, page 45.)

"*Dr. WALL*, *Mr. SELDEN*, and *Dr. HAMMOND*, suppose christian baptism was borrowed from *Jewish Proselyte baptism*, which infants received. *Sir Norton KNATCHBULL* rejects the proselyte plunging, and recurs to *circumcision*. *VITRINGA* and *VENEMA* object to circumcision as a ground for infant baptism, and suppose, with *WITSIUS*, that some infants are in a *relative state of grace*. *Bishop PRIDEAUX* and *HEIDEGGER* contended, that infants have the *faith and the covenant*, though not of the covenantees. *Mr. BAXTER* makes the *faith of parents* the condition of their children's church membership and salvation; and *Mr. HENRY* considers a *profession of faith* made by parents an infant's title to baptism; but *Archbishop LEIGHTON* opposes this, as 'neither clear from scripture or sound reason.' *CALVIN*, *MELANCTHON*, and generally the Lutheran churches, says (*BINGHAM*) own a sort of *faith in infants*. The church of England, and, of course, most of her divines, proceed on the profession of faith made by the *sureties*, the godfathers and godmothers. An anonymous author thought children, by baptism, 'brought into the covenant of grace.' This, another opposes, and maintains that they are 'in the covenant of grace before their baptism;' and the third opposes both the former, on the ground that many thus described, and baptized, grow up, and live and die the servants of Satan."

"See extracts from the above-named writers, and many others, in which they have given us the reasons and grounds of their practice, in *Booth's Pad Exam*. V. II. p. 491—499."

of their concessions ? does it weaken the evidence to the truth for which we contend, derived, for instance, from such an admission as that of *Luther*, "that without doubt the form, immersion, was instituted by Christ himself;" and again, "that dipping in baptism signifieth death," wherefore "he would have those that are to be baptized, to be entirely immersed as the word imports and the mystery signifies;" (Booth i. 163); or that of *Mr. Dan. Rogers*, that immersion "is exceeding material to the ordinance;" (Booth i. 57); or that of Archbishop *Tillotson*, that anciently those who were baptized were immersed and buried in the water to represent their death to sin; or that of *Mr. Burkitt*, (Booth i. 156,) that the form immersion had a mystical signification, representing the burial of our old man; or that of Archbishop *Leighton*, that the dipping in water represents our dying with Christ; or that of Bishop *Taylor*, that the pouring or sprinkling being against the analogy and mysterious signification of the sacrament is not to be complied with; or, to name no more, that of *Dr. Wall*, that immersion expresses the design of the sacrament much better?

We may be told that these learned pedobaptists retained their practice, and therefore were not of our way of thinking; that they found some method by which they settled the matter with their consciences. Possibly many of them did; but the question is, have they not, in the mean while, conceded as a fact, what must for ever nullify any argument against immersion, namely, that this form is essential to the design of the ordinance? After this, *Dr. Doddridge*, revered as his name deservedly is, may tell us, it is too cold in this climate to use immersion; or *Luther*, however worthy of the veneration of Protestants, may say it is exceedingly unpleasant to overturn a general custom; our answer with all deference to these and the many other distinguished pedobaptists to whom we have in these pages referred, and whose worth and character we still revere and love, must be, But Christ you acknowledge instituted this form; our Saviour you admit designed it as a significant symbol of the spiritual grace it represents; how dare we then destroy its significancy?

When, too, we remember the weakness of the human mind, there is no difficulty, and no want of charity, in suggesting a multitude of other causes, besides those already hinted at, some, perhaps, even more censurable than those, which may, almost unknown to the individuals themselves, have so operated as to give to very weak excuses sufficient strength to retain them in their accustomed practice. One of easy disposition dreads the loss of the kind regard of his friends and

connections—he cannot bear to wound others, though this should be occasioned by his pursuit of the path of obedience : another fears he shall lose reputation : to a third, some comfortable living, or rich benefice, or ecclesiastical dignity, blends with his natural disinclination for change : another, giving a form of greater conscientiousness to his conduct, persuades himself he will be *more useful* in his present situation.

But, dear reader, by whatever various motives those learned men who have in effect abandoned the principles, though not the practice, of infant baptism, or sprinkling, may have been retained to their party, you, and we, are going to be judged *for ourselves*. The evidence on which scriptural baptism rests is before us. It furnishes no slight *surmise*, no flimsy *inference* ; it is full, and strong, and conclusive ; and in view of it, we beg, most affectionately and solemnly to press on your conscience the duty of obedience to the command of your Saviour. Can you say before God that *your* sole reason for not being baptized is, that there is not satisfactory evidence that the *bathing of believers* in water was the baptism of the scriptures ? Are you not conscious that the reproach of the cross, the fear of man, or some temporal loss or inconvenience, has weighed greatly in preventing your candid examination of the subject, in warping the evidence or the arguments, or in deterring you from the performance of the duty ? But how will this bear the scrutiny of the final judgment ? It is to that test a christian should bring all his conduct. Do you not *now* see convincing evidence of your duty ? If so, we would say to you in the language of scripture, “ confer not,” dear brother, “ with flesh and blood,” “ why tarriest thou” any longer, “ arise and be baptized.”

CHAPTER II.

MR. ELDER'S CHARGES AGAINST THE BAPTISTS, UNGENEROUS AND UNTRUE.

We should at once advance to the last thing proposed in this treatise, a solemn appeal to all real christians to combine for the reformation of the church of Christ, and so take our leave of the reader ; but we do not feel ourselves justified in altogether passing by the unjust aspersions which Mr. Elder has cast on the denomination of christians whom he has deserted ; to which therefore we shall now pay some attention.

I. The first complaint of Mr. Elder which we notice, is the treatment which he states he received on the discovery of his change of principles. This complaint is subject to animadversion on several grounds :

1. When a man, and especially a minister, avows a change of tenets in religion, it rarely happens that no warmth or excitement is created. This appears to be inseparable from the weakness of human nature. It is not peculiar to any class of men ; it is common to all. When the writer of these pages therefore first learned that Mr. Elder had not only been deprived of his office as a minister in the Baptist connection, which of course was unavoidable ; but that it was recommended to the churches not to hear him preach ; he was of opinion that there was too much severity in this preceeding, and regretted it exceedingly. He does not now pretend to *decide* that milder measures, in some respects, might not without inconsistency have been adopted ; but he is grieved to say that the perusal of the letters which are here reviewed, has forced upon him some painful convictions with respect to Mr. Elder's behaviour. He is far, very far he trusts from feeling hardly towards others, merely because they differ from him in their opinions ; but when he observes the sad want of candour often so *flagrantly* apparent in Mr. Elder's letters, he cannot but suppose that many things of the same sort, in the course of the examination before the council who assisted in the dismissal of Mr. Elder from his office, must have produced a conviction on their minds, that there was more in this case to be censured, than a mere change of sentiment respecting the subjects or the mode of scriptural baptism.

Instances of the want of candour alluded to, may be seen in pages 38, 47, 48, 50, 117, 118, 119, 120, of this treatise. In these cases Mr. Elder takes no notice whatever of arguments which he had himself previously used, and which therefore especially demanded a reply from him ; on the contrary, he reasons as though he had *never heard* of such arguments ; and in more cases than one, wholly passes by *facts* of essential importance although published in his own former defence of the principles he now opposes. We repeat here what we have formerly stated, that in such a case an honest man, and one sincerely desirous of giving perfect satisfaction to the body of christians he was about to leave, was bound to shew, not so much what he could say for his new opinions, as what answer convinced him of the fallacy of his old arguments. How does this consist with his taking no notice of them at all ?

It should be remembered too, that a person changing his sentiments from honest conviction, is not exposed to the same

temptation to be uncandid, as one is who is immersed in all the prejudices of education and party ; and the same allowance for any want of fairness cannot with equal reason be made for him.

2. Another consideration which, while on this painful subject, ought not to be omitted, is Mr. Elder's greedy accumulation of almost *every* notion, we will not say misrepresentation and misstatement, that has ever appeared. As we have already shewn, all pedobaptist writers of note *differ widely* from one another as respects the *grounds* on which they held their practice, regarding both the mode and subjects of baptism : the candour of all, too, with few exceptions, extorts repeated *concessions* to the opposite side, but Mr. Elder makes no concessions—abandons no ground, on which can be established only a shew of plausibility. Now we must confess ourselves quite at a loss to understand how a man who has *studied* and *written* on a subject, which comprizes such a multitude of distinct facts and arguments, as does that of baptism, when he changes his opinion as to the grand result, shall be brought to see *every* particular argument and fact, numerous as these are, in a new light *without exception* ; and yet, what argument or fact is there, relating to infant baptism, which was ever refuted or disproved, that Mr. Elder has not adopted in his present letters ? There is hardly one. Formerly he believed the church to be composed only of spiritual members, but he cannot see it now ; formerly the arguments relating to the supposed sameness of the Jewish and Christian churches could receive at his hands a distinct refutation ; now he fathers them *one and all* ; once *all* the *inferences* that infant baptism was practised were futile, now not one of them escapes his friendly grasp ; a short time ago history informed him that there were plenty of pools and baths at Jerusalem, now that page is obliterated ; once the testimony of pedobaptists themselves to the primitive mode of baptism, and the practice of the churches for centuries, was an undeniable fact, now his memory refuses to retain it. That some of these arguments or facts might seem under some perverting influence to lose their former force, we can believe possible ; but if our readers can concede the possibility of this *complete* and *entire* change of things, even to the commonest *fact* of history, they certainly are endued with some rule for scanning the human mind radically different from ours.

3. There is, however, a far worse departure from the principles of baptist churches discoverable in Mr. Elder's letters, than that which respects the ordinance of baptism alone. This is no less than an abandonment of vital religion as *the test of*

membership in Christian churches. The baptist churches believe, that where *real faith* exists, *vital religion*, the religion of the heart, exists likewise ; and accordingly, they look for such fruits as may give *credible proof* that the faith professed is real, before they administer baptism. Does not Mr. Elder (page 44 of his letters,) clearly abandon this principle ? He there tells us that he sees no evil that would result from a West India planter having all his slaves baptized. He seems carefully to avoid naming as a *condition*, the previous possession by them of vital faith : to have named this as a condition, indeed, would have been inconsistent with the strain of his argument, which was to make it appear that there is *no* difference between adults and infants as respects baptism ; but if faith were a condition of baptism, there *would* be a difference. Nay, does not Mr. Elder himself avow in effect, that he admitted his abandonment of this principle at the time the council was held which recommended his dismission ? He tells us (page 87,) " I had said to some of my brethren in private, that I considered any man *who read the Bible and professed to believe it to be the word of God, and who assisted in supporting the Christian ministry, and who worshipped with a Christian congregation*, to be a professing Christian — and I had asked, where would be the impropriety of such a man professing christianity *by baptism*." How could any one in plainer terms abandon the principles on which our churches are formed ? On such a system as Mr. Elder has here stated, there is scarcely an individual in any congregation in Christendom but would be entitled to baptism. Then spiritual religion is no longer to be sought as the test of fitness for membership in our churches. Our *Methodist* brethren speak not after this manner, they require, we believe, a hearty desire to seek God. The *Presbyterians* in America and the *Independants* in England speak not thus, they contend as earnestly as we for spiritual religion. The *New Testament* assuredly speaks not thus, for it exhibits as the fit materials of christian churches, those who have *the law written in their hearts*. The *Evangelical* part of the *Churches of England* and *Scotland* speak not thus, for though they baptize infants who have nothing to do with faith, and therefore not with baptism, yet if an adult person were to be baptized, we apprehend that they would desire first to see in him proofs of vital faith, and certain we are, that, among many of their pious members, the unholy character of those who are admitted to the supper of the Lord is a matter of unceasing lamentation. Nay, the *Congregationalists* to which body Mr. Elder is now, we believe, professedly joined, use not this language ; throughout the United States, where their

numbers are greater, and possibly their discipline more fixed and ascertained, than in this country, with the exception of those of their churches which have become *Unitarian* or *Soci-nian*, they all unite in earnestly contending for the same principles respecting church members as are held by the baptists ; and yet Mr. Elder very smoothly admits that he *made this statement to some of his brethren in private*, as if there were nothing in it, as if he did not know it to be a principle which they must necessarily regard as *subversive of the churches*, and *destructive of true religion*. We bear with a man who from the prejudices of education, or a confused view of truth, has never been brought to see this principle ; but when a man who has been led into the broad sunshine of a doctrine that constitutes the glory and happiness of so many protestant communities, who has himself preached it for years, now slides away from the principle, as if it were one that he never had been accustomed to hold, are we not compelled to look with apprehension upon him, as a man, whose relapse into darkness and error threatens to make him dangerous to the peace of our churches ? We cannot, we dare not sanction such a person as a public teacher.

4. As so serious a charge is made against the Baptist churches, the following fact ought not to be omitted. So lately as the autumn of 1833, Mr. Elder prepared a journal of a missionary tour which he in company with another minister made to Cape Breton. In this journal, which may be found in the Second No. of the Baptist Magazine, (New Series,) are several passages that indicate the most hearty attachment to baptist sentiments. How is this to be reconciled with the advertisement to his present letters ? he there represents himself as fearing he was on the wrong side of the question, even before the reply appeared to his former letters, which reply was published in 1823. ten years before.

5. On page 57 of his letters, Mr. Elder has preferred an allegation against the baptists as a denomination, which is not only very unfairly stated, but, if made a prominent topic at his examination before the council of ministers, to say the least, was, under the circumstances, exceedingly injudicious : we allude to the *pecuniary support of the ministry*. The reputation of a public teacher of religion is a delicate matter ; it is easily tarnished ; and when a charge of neglect in the maintenance of the ministry, is alleged at the very time when a man is about changing sides, as one of the important grounds, on which he establishes his change of views, it is hardly in the nature of man to exclude suspicion that all is not *honest* in the change.

But we say the charge is unfair—exceedingly unfair : the only proof of it, he offers, is that a circular letter of an association of Baptist churches in Maine, urged strongly on the people this duty, and complained of their neglects. Christian churches of every denomination are backward, doubtless, in many duties, and faithful ministers will speak plainly on such subjects, but is it correct to judge from this of the comparative neglect of different churches ? Doubtless a faithful minister among the Congregationalists may often be heard to press on his people the duty of liberality. Shall we therefore conclude that they are more illiberal, more slothful, and more uncharitable than others ?

Moreover, when we compare baptist churches with others, what does the difference amount to ? Methodists are largely supported by the English Conference ; Church of England ministers are wholly, with almost no exception, sustained by a charitable Society in the mother country : Presbyterians also, are to some extent indebted to Great Britain ; Baptists and Congregationalists alone are *wholly* dependant on the *voluntary support of the people*. Now we ask, is there any very great inequality in the support received by the ministers of these denominations respectively, considering the means of their flocks ? Let the results of their respective labours furnish a reply.—Men cannot labour who are not fed. Now, it is not more, we believe, than half a century since the *first* baptist church was formed in this country, and there are now 53 churches, almost every one of which is furnished with a public place of worship, and some have two ; amongst these there are 34 ordained ministers, not to mention a large number of licensed preachers ; and there are 4540 members, besides large congregations. And where now are the *Congregationalist Societies* in this province that will compare with these ?

Let it not be forgotten too, that no denomination in this province has exceeded the baptists in their efforts for public education—witness the establishment of Horton Academy—its rapid progress—and the large sums which they have contributed to its support.

Besides, if some backwardness be admitted to exist in the baptist churches as respects an *adequate* support of their pastors ; there are some peculiar causes for this, which Mr. Elder well knew ; ought he not to have avowed them ? When the baptist ministers in this province commenced their labours, what is now understood by *evangelical* religion was almost unknown in this country. They had seen few instances of learning, or comfortable maintenance, *unconnected* with irreligion

and worldliness ; and they fell into the common mistake that these therefore were *inseparable* ; and accordingly, on principle devoted themselves to poverty, and discouraged the people from liberal contributions. They perceived the error, however, and retracted : but the habit was formed, and was not at once to be changed. Now, is such a cause as this fairly charged on the principles of *believers' baptism* ? Much more fair to charge it on the *pedobaptist* sentiments, in connection with which the country was sunk into the moral and religious stupor, which aroused the zeal of our baptist preachers.

One fact more. A man is most likely to judge of other cases from his own. Mr. Elder for ought we know, was not well sustained when a baptist minister. But, let it be remembered that people will not adequately sustain their minister unless he is wholly devoted to their service. This we apprehend was never the case with Mr. Elder ; we mention it not to his discredit, but we believe the fact to be, that losses previous to his engaging in the ministry, made it necessary for him to employ much of his time in secular matters : under such circumstances no people can be expected to feel their relation to their minister as they ought.

It is idle to draw the distinction Mr. Elder makes between baptist churches and others, because only the baptized adults are *bound* to support the minister. The fact is notorious, that just the same union subsists between a faithful *baptist* minister and the congregation at large among whom he labours, as exists in any other case. People know the value of religion sufficiently to aid its support, though they will not always repent and believe.

Mr. Elder would persuade his readers that baptist principles indispose to christian efforts. Now, we do not believe, by any means, that the proportion of effort in the United States on the part of the Congregationalists so greatly exceeds that of the Baptists, as Mr. Elder pretends ; but if it be greater, he must know, and ought to have stated, that in the New England States, where the *chief exertions* are made for religious objects, the Baptists are far *less* numerous than the Congregationalists, and that throughout the whole country the persecutions they in their origin received, the uncompromising doctrines they preached, and other causes, prevented the wealthier classes from often uniting with them ; so that while their *numbers* are great, their *means* are by no means great in proportion. The story of Carey and Ward, of Judson and Boardman, of the devoted Baptist Missionaries in the West India Islands, and many like

cases, ought forever to silence this incorrect and ungenerous allegation.

6. Mr. Elder adverts to the case of Dr. Chapin as having received very different treatment from the Congregationalist denomination, which he quitted from his conviction of the scriptural obligation of believers' baptism. Before this can have any weight, we ought to know that Mr. Elder was equally unimpeachable. The people and ministers whom he quitted had the deepest conviction of Dr. Chapin's sincerity and high character.

II. Mr. Elder takes occasion from the opinion of baptists that in proportion as light spreads infant baptism will disappear, to make some highly injurious remarks, (p. 49.)

1. He thinks he disproves the justness of that conviction by alleging *his own case* ! Mr. Elder cannot believe that the prevalence of adult baptism will be the result of superior light, because *he* has finally abandoned these principles ! Is not this much the same as saying that he does not believe in adult baptism, because he does not ? Which is certainly not a *very potent* argument ; and how, we ask, does it sound, in the mouth of the very person who so strongly rebukes the baptists for their alleged undue confidence in their opinions ? He here boldly tells us "believers' baptism cannot prevail because *I have changed my mind about it* !" Would not this be insufferable in any man however learned and wise, unless possessed of the inspiration of an apostle ? What should we think of Luther, or Calvin, or Beza, or Tillotson, or any other worthy, most distinguished in ecclesiastical history, who should have the hardihood to say of any sentiment, "It cannot be the offspring of superior light, because"—what ? not that it is no where found in the word of God ; not that it is inconsistent with some weighty argument, but because—"I do not believe in it." Whatever other laurels such a man might have won, we think all would admit that it was not his fate to wear the ornament of modesty.

If a change of sentiments were to be regarded as indicative of the power of the principles adopted, Mr. Elder seems to forget how many names there are, which as most men will be disposed to think, weigh at least as much as his. Dr. Chapin was a learned, talented, and successful Congregationalist minister, and was compelled as he informs us himself, in the midst of his highest usefulness in his ministry, and notwithstanding many consequent sacrifices, to adopt Baptist sentiments from a conviction of his duty to God. The two first American Missionaries, Judson and Rice, on their passage to the East in different ships,

while viewing in prospect their duties as conscientious heralds of salvation amidst the heathen, were led, from the same reason, without any intercourse together, to adopt almost simultaneously the same views. Such instances might be multiplied almost without end. In *this community* are some whose *sincerity* will not be questioned, and who will not be charged as quite incapable of *research*, or of *duly balancing evidence*, who after careful examination, and reflection, in some instances protracted for years, have felt themselves drawn by the *force of truth* to acquiesce in the scriptural duty of believers' baptism. Let Mr. Elder look, too, at the prodigious increase of the Baptist denomination in the United States, the largest there according to the *Encyclopædia Americana*, numbering upwards of 6000 churches, and he will perhaps not be so easily warped by the fact of his own change—but

2. Adult baptism Mr. Elder tells us cannot be the result of superior light, because some who have embraced it have held at the same time erroneous sentiments, (p. 50.) Did Mr. Elder think that this statement contained the force of *argument*, or was it merely introduced in order to cast another shaft of reproach on those who, he complains, have "drummed him out." Badly as he sometimes argues, this piece of reasoning is too gross to permit us to save his *charity* at the expense of his *logic*.

How many men have held some important truths together with some destructive errors? Were the truths therefore not the offspring of light? *Erasmus* admitted many of the best tenets of Protestantism, and yet clung to the *Church of Rome*—are Protestant tenets therefore not true? *Luther* burst through the bars of error and bigotry which centuries had rendered venerable, and poured on the world a flood of light, and yet held to *consubstantiation*—did the truths he taught result nevertheless from light in no wise superior to the darkness of Romanism? Did Mr. Elder forget, too, how many *pedobaptists* besides *Erasmus* and *Luther*, have held and propagated error? will he therefore conclude that *pedobaptist* sentiments are wrong?

3. But he goes yet further, and directly charges on the principles of adult baptism the *production* of error; to prove which he cites the *Mormonites*, *Winchester*, *Elias Smith*, and *Alexander Campbell*. With these persons we have nothing now to do either in the way of defence or attack of the principles held by them, but only as respects the use Mr. Elder makes of their case. Our reply is very simple and direct, If the errors of *baptists* must be attributed to *baptist* sentiments,

to what must the errors of *pedobaptists* be attributed? Mr. Elder surely has forgotten the mournful page of Ecclesiastical history, on the subject of heresies. As he will have us believe that infant baptism was the practice of the first ages, we ask him *what were the Nicolaitans, the Gnostics, the Cerinthians, the Ebionites, the Marcionites, the Ascetics, the Ophites, the Sabelians, the Manichæans, the Pelagians, the Arians?* he must of course answer—*Pedobaptists*. And looking to more modern times, we ask also, what are the *Unitarians* and *Socinians*, of England and America, are they not for the most part *pedobaptists*? What were *Priestley*, and *Belsham*, and *Lindsey*, were they not *pedobaptists*? What are the *Unitarians* that at this moment rend in two the Congregationalists of the United States, the denomination to which, we believe, Mr. Elder now belongs—are they not *pedobaptists*? And on which side are those in *France* and *Spain*, and *Italy*, and *Austria*; in *Bavaria*, *Bohemia*, and *Hungary*, and many other countries; who bow to the *Pope*, and worship saints, and pray for the dead, and “for a pretence make long prayers,” and put forms instead of faith? are they not all *pedobaptists*? And what are the modern *Neologists* of Germany, who under the mask of Christianity, deny all miracles; all spiritual influence; the inspiration of the scriptures; and the divinity of Christ; until they have reduced revelation to a level with private opinion; and who have filled the chairs of *Luther* and *Melanchthon*, and the pulpits of *Bucer*, and *Calvin*, and *Zuinglius*, and all the reformers, with their destructive heresies—are these not all *pedobaptists*? Will Mr. Elder therefore charge their errors on their *pedobaptist* sentiments? It would not be difficult to shew that some of them have indeed this origin.

Mr. Alexander Campbell is quoted by Mr. Elder (p. 52,) as a foremost instance of the “tendency of the principles of adult baptism to set the person, [the mind] afloat;” and the reason he gives for his alleged great errors is that, having been educated a *pedobaptist*, he “embraced the principles of adult baptism with great zeal.” Does Mr. Elder fail to perceive that on this principle we must necessarily regard him as equally unsteady? he was originally he tells us a *pedobaptist*; he certainly embraced the principles of adult baptism with zeal, for he published a series of letters in support of them, a good deal more conclusive than these we now review. Is it not, then, surely, the part of charity in us to raise the note of warning in the ears of our *pedobaptist* friends who have now received him? for on his own shewing, there is no little reason to fear lest he may be still “afloat.”

What answer would Mr. Elder make to the Romanists if

they were to say to him, we perceive that you charge on baptist sentiments the errors into which some baptists have run; we think your principle perfectly correct; all was quiet in the holy apostolical church till you Protestants appeared; you have set, men's minds perfectly afloat; who ever heard of Socinians, Unitarians, Universalists, Antinomians, Neologists, Supralapsarians and Sublapsarians, Hypercalvinists and Low arminians, until Protestants appeared? We think Mr. Elder must be speechless; or else, avowing the gross injustice of his present slander against the baptists he must say "True, these errors have followed Protestant principles, because the light of truth, like Ithuriel's spear, has detected and brought out a multitude of errors which fostered in secret under the cloak of ignorance, in which Satan once involved the world." Free inquiry, which is essential to truth, will also be abused by error.

In view of all the above concomitants of infant baptism, it really becomes laughable to find Mr. Elder gravely telling us, nevertheless, (p. 56,) that "infant baptism tends to perpetuate Christianity." Infant baptism perpetuate Christianity! let the dungeons of the inquisition, the rack, the flame, and the faggot—let the cold infidelity of the German Neologists—let the pride, the pomp, the arrogancy, of national religious establishments say what sort of christianity infant baptism has perpetuated! If infant baptism is so necessary to the preservation of Christianity, how will Mr. Elder account for its preservation for so long a time and in so great purity among the baptists of England and Wales; among those of the Waldenses who held to these sentiments; as well as for the rapid increase of baptist churches in the United States?

III. But Mr. Elder is not content with reproaching baptist churches with the errors of men whose sentiments he knows they reprobate as strongly as he; he must also reproach them with their misfortunes. He labours to turn their *alleged* want of learning into an argument against them, and their sentiments.

Baptists have repeatedly been bitterly persecuted; the Waldenses were hunted down by pedobaptists with fire and sword; John Bunyan, the author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and pastor of a baptist church in Bedford, was imprisoned by pedobaptists ten years in Bedford Jail for his faithfulness; Roger Williams the first baptist in the United States, a learned and talented minister, was driven from Salem and forced to take refuge in what was then the wilderness of Rehoboth, near Providence, by the pedobaptist Congregationalists whom Mr. Elder has now joined; and numberless were the martyr-

doms both in England and America, by "stripes and imprisonment," "cruel scourgings and mockings," and even by death itself, which baptists have been called to endure at the hands of *pedobaptists*. We name not these things because we glory in the sufferings of our denomination; or because we do not know that many, very many, *pedobaptists* are now ready to weep tears of blood at what they regard as a deep stain on their history; but we now name them solely for the purpose of shewing, that a community so persecuted was almost unavoidably excluded from the advantages of literature. That they possessed the truth in singular pureness and beauty, while all the learning of Europe was enlisted on the side of Papal darkness, let the confessions of faith of the Waldenses testify.* But though possessing the truth in the sacred temples of their hearts, they were certainly not in a condition to write and publish expensive *commentaries* of the scriptures. In this depressed condition they have continued until of late years; for, poverty, and want of the ornaments of literature, repelling as these evils are to the rich and proud, easily become perpetuated in a religious community, whose distinguishing rite, too, is so complete and unreserved an act of self dedication to God.

Hence our resort, where literature was needed, has been made to some extent to the commentaries of *Pedobaptists*. With what degree of justice or right feeling Mr. Elder would turn this to our disadvantage the reader must judge. This was at least no *argument*, inasmuch as learning does not ensure purity either of principle or practice—we are therefore compelled to regard it as calumny. Precisely the same sort of reproach is made in England at this day against the Dissenters as a body. An unjust and invidious preference of one sect has excluded others from the Universities; and hence advantage is taken to revile dissenters as an *ignorant* race. This is to drive the poor man from your door without bread, and then reproach him for his starved condition. But the reproach is by no means true, in either case, to the extent it is carried. Dissenters in England have preserved the truth in their churches, at times when almost all beside were infatuated with pride, and place, and power; nor have they been destitute of men with sufficient learning to announce and expound their sentiments; and it *pedobaptist* dissenters have had their *Owen*, their *Matthew Henry*, their *Doddridge*; so have Baptists had their *Gale*, their *Bunyon*, and their *Dr. Gill*. What, though their learned and

* See their confessions of faith in Jones' Church History, II. 42, 43, 44, 46.

talented men have not always turned their hand like Dr. Gill to commentaries on the scriptures, in form ; Dr. Gill is at least *one* commentator ; and though his system be not wholly approved, it was that, not of *baptists* but of *the times* ; his learning was confessedly deep and laborious ; and the information he accumulates is a treasure of knowledge. *Andrew Fuller's* writings too, are *in fact* a commentary on the scriptures ; and concerning their author, though a man possessed of no classical learning whatever, a learned pedobaptist professor of Theology declared not long since to the writer of these pages, that he was one of the *profoundest Theologians of this age*. Besides, there is but just departed a *Robert Hall*, of whom Prof. Stuart of Andover, a pedobaptist, writes, as " that distinguished man among them, [the baptists] whose sun has recently gone down, although its beams illuminate the whole horizon." And of whose style the celebrated Dugald Stuart spoke, as " uniting all the excellencies of Addison and Johnson, without the defects of either : " and there is still living a *John Foster*, whose essays on " decision of character," and other subjects, exhibit as all allow, one of the deepest thinkers in the English language : and has there not been a *Stennet*, a *Keach*, a *Fawcett*, a *Booth*, an *Evans*, a *Ryland*, and a multitude of others, whose contributions have all served to enrich the stores of spiritual knowledge ? Let the baptists then be no longer reproached for their *occasional* resort to pedobaptist commentators.

The *insinuation* was contracted and ungenerous. The whole world is indebted to Baptists for some of the noblest institutions and christian enterprizes of the present day. Who, let us ask, first suggested the project of the British and Foreign Bible Society, sustained it with unwearying zeal as one of its Secretaries, and at length fell a sacrifice to his labours in its cause ? The committee of that Society themselves reply, "*Joseph Hughes*," a *Baptist* minister. (See report for 1834.) Who, also, originated the London Religious Tract Society, and sustained it in like manner till his death—the answer is, *The same individual*. Who first in England possessed christian zeal and courage enough to plunge amidst the poor heathens of Hindostan, with the Gospel message ; to oppose the corruption, and hateful example, of the mercantile Lords of the East ; and establish, in opposition to their dominion and their wishes, the banner of the cross, amidst the millions on whose necks they trod ? The answer is, *Carey and Ward*, two poor and humble *Baptist* ministers, the former of whom, after having by his own efforts united to devoted piety the most distinguished learning, and translated the scriptures into many Eastern languages, ■

but just gone to his rest, loaded with the admiration and gratitude of the whole christian world. And who were they who first conceived and put in operation the truly benevolent labour of uniting all denominations of Christians in prayer for these and other Missionaries on the first Monday of every month, a measure which now almost universally prevails throughout England and America, amongst both baptist and pedobaptist dissenting churches? The answer is *Andrew Fuller*, and a few other *Baptist* ministers in and about *Kettering*, in *Northamptonshire*.— And finally, who, we ask, have persisted, notwithstanding the reproaches and fiery persecution of the enemies of liberty, in preaching the Gospel to the much injured slaves of the *West Indies*, to the saving of thousands of souls, and the completion of the work of emancipation? The answer still is, that *Baptist* Missionaries were very principal, though not sole, agents in this work of christian charity.

IV. Finally, we are charged with bigotry—and why? because of what *Mr. Elder* chooses to term “an excessive attachment” to our principles, “beyond any evidence we have of their truth or importance,” but which *we believe to be* “a firm fidelity to the plain principles of the Gospel.” That attachment to these principles may sometimes in individual cases be accompanied with undue warmth, is almost unavoidable, so long as human nature remains imperfect. But is this the sort of bigotry that deserves to be held up to contempt and reproach? Shall we *reproach* a man for his faithfulness to his sincere convictions, when he holds them so as to wrong no one? And was it prudent, was it honorable in a *pedobaptist* to do this.— We believe that many a *pedobaptist* laments the persecutions that baptists have suffered at the hands of *pedobaptists*; but when thus unjustly reproached, must we not in self defence, and in the spirit of Paul, assert the character that really belongs to us? Baptists alone of all the denominations of Christians in the world first stood up for the principles of the Gospel, as respects perfect religious liberty; they alone carried out to the full the Saviour's principle, “Whoso taketh the sword shall perish with the sword.” *Roger Williams*, a *baptist*, was the author, under God, of these principles of religious liberty, which are now only beginning to be fully acknowledged even in America; and are at last breathing on England a hallowed influence that shall not end, we trust, until the Church of England itself shall be, at length, reformed, and mitres, and rich salaries, and pluralities, and exactions, and tythes, and invidious distinctions, and lordly pride, and ambition, and lust of power, shall give place in the qualifications of the Christian ministry,



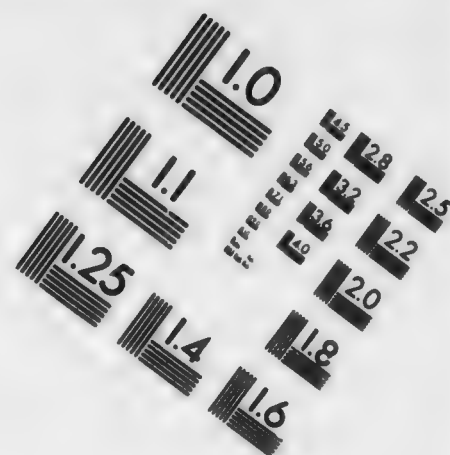
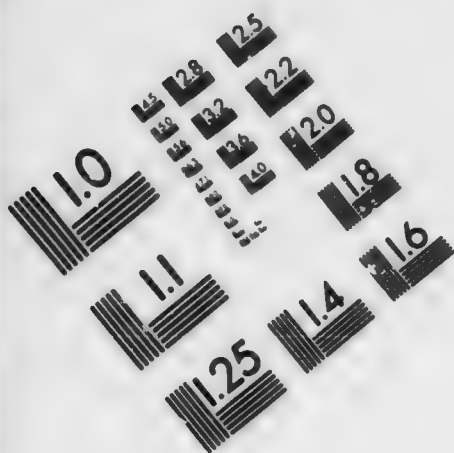
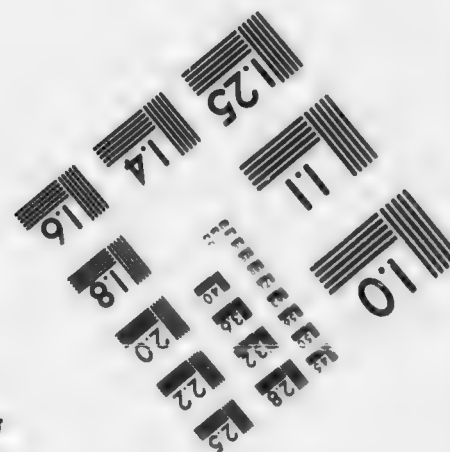
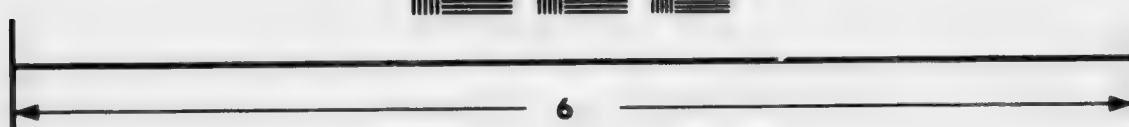
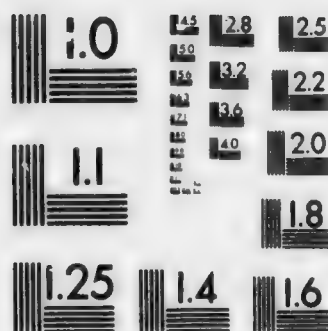


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to the humility, and piety, and zeal, of those who shall evince a holy and charitable solicitude for immortal souls, and whose faithfulness shall be sealed in the affections of grateful and well instructed flocks.

It is not against baptists that the reproach of bigotry justly lies—Baptists are they who have *opposed* it and *suffered* for their opposition. It was the *pedobaptist* magistrates of Bedford who incarcerated Buryan ; the *pedobaptist* authorities of Geneva who burned Servetus ; the *pedobaptist* courts of Massachusetts who banished Roger Williams. At many a petty instance of intolerance within *our own experience*, we are accustomed to smile, and, in most cases, deem such things unworthy of notice ; but when charged with bigotry in a manner which implies that baptists are *distinguished* for this fault, by one, too, who is *hailed as a champion* for his new opinions ; we cannot refrain from calling on our readers to testify to a few facts sufficiently notorious : We ask them whether they never hear baptist sentiments spoken of as a “ horrible delusion ;” and congregations of *pedobaptists* warned against entering the walls of baptist places of worship ; whether sundry epithets of contempt are not in pretty frequent use, such as “ deluded dippers ;” “ anabaptists ;” “ ignorant fanatics ;” “ enthusiasts,” &c. These things we know to be not of uncommon occurrence among some ministers and leading persons of the *pedobaptist* party ; and while this is the case, we cannot but feel that it becomes *pedobaptists* to be silent on the score of *bigotry*. And for what, we ask, are these reproaches lavished upon us ? For adhering to a practice which, as Luther, Calvin, Tillotson, Usher, Leighton, Burnet, Baxter, and a host of the most distinguished *pedobaptists* themselves admit, was *the practice of the primitive church*—was that of *Christ and his apostles* ; for daring to differ so far from the established usages of modern times, as to be baptized in the *same mode* in which the *Saviour* of the world *himself* was baptized ; and *which mode*, to use the very words of *Luther* “ WAS WITHOUT DOUBT INSTITUTED BY HIM,” instituted for the very reason, in the language of no less a person than Dr. Isaac Barrow, that “ the mersion in water, and the emersion thence, doth *figure our death* to the former [worldly] defilements, and [reviving] to a new life.” Were it necessary, the catalogue of hard speeches, intolerance, and even persecutions, might be enlarged ; but we forbear ; we would gladly drown the recollection of all such things in acts of kindness and love ; and should not now have adverted to them, but in defence of a whole denomination of Christians most unjustly reproached.

The truth of the charge we solemnly deny ; individual instances of want of temper of course may occur, but the baptists as a body reprobate any *approach* to similar uncharitableness ; if any of their own members offend thus they mourn over it, and rebuke it ; Mr. Elder knew that such were their principles, and yet he can now stand aloof from those with whom he once professed to walk in christian fellowship, and pointing the finger of scorn and contempt, raise against his "beloved brethren," as he calls them, the cry of *bigotry* ! Would that the act were so secret as to permit us to respond, as an *admonitory* caution, the cry, oh "tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon."

If Mr. Elder was wronged when ejected from the ministry, which we acknowledge we cannot now but seriously doubt, the natural heat of such an occasion which came suddenly and by surprize on those who composed the council, may afford some palliation ; but before these letters appeared, he has had time to reflect and cool ; one would think the recollection of the labours, the self devotedness, the privations and sacrifices, the unquestioned piety of many of the excellent ministers of Christ, with whom he had lived in fellowship, and whom he involves in this indiscriminate slander, would have checked his pen ; the smooth way in which he writes too, indicates the absence of much constitutional vehemence ; and his positive loss was not great, if report is correct, which represents him as in possession of a much more lucrative charge than that which he was compelled to relinquish ; one cannot but be appalled, therefore, at the *appearance of deliberate hostility* with which he thus plunges the dagger of calumny into the heart of a whole community, with whom he long walked in professed christian love and esteem, while at the same time he approaches them with the smiling address "beloved brethren."

Some of his minor allegations the writer of these pages knows to be untrue ; they are almost too despicable to notice, and he therefore contents himself with saying, that he has personally seen on the part of all baptist ministers in this province with whom he has become sufficiently acquainted, the most affectionate behaviour towards all, and especially all whom they deemed to be of "the household of faith ;" and so far from confining the expressions of their *fraternal* regard to their own people, he, long before he became a baptist himself, admired the liberality with which they addressed with the affectionate appellatives *brother* or *sister*, those christians who were opposed to their peculiar sentiments.

But enough, we are weary of the invidious task of repel-

ling this most unjust and uncalled for attack. While venting what we believe to be an honest indignation, we desire not to awaken unhallowed feeling, and gladly, so far as truth permits, would throw the mantle of charity over a multitude of sins. We beseech our brethren not to be too much moved with unmerited reproach, and to such *pedobaptist* brethren as will permit us to walk with them in the cords of brotherly affection, we continue to avow this to be our preference and our joy.

In conclusion we cannot forbear saying, that with respect to those Gospel truths which distinguish the Baptists as a denomination, the public to a vast extent labour under a most blameable *imposition*. How few there are who while our sentiments are denounced, perhaps as a "horrible delusion," ever hear from the public minister of religion, who, may himself use this language, the acknowledgment, that such men among the *pedobaptists* themselves as CALVIN, LUTHER, BEZA, the celebrated Mr. SELDEN, the learned Professors NEANDER and STUART, Drs. WALL, MACKNIGHT, CAMPBELL, and WHITBY, Bishops BURNET, and JEREMY TAYLOR, Archbishops USHER, SECKER, TILLOTSON and LEIGHTON, admit that our mode of Baptism was the *primitive and long continued practice of the church* ! How few are sensible, when the immersion of a christian believer is spoken of with sovereign contempt, that if the most distinguished champion in the *Church of England*, for *pedobaptist* sentiments, were to rise from the dead he would thus reprove the scorner, "That the general and ordinary way [in the primitive church] was to baptize by immersion," "is so plain and clear by an infinite number of passages, that one cannot but pity the weak endeavours of such *pedobaptists* as would maintain the negative of it ;" or that if such a man as Archbishop Tillotson were heard he would say that "anciently, those who were baptized, were immersed and buried in the water, to REPRESENT their death to sin ;" or, that to this hour, even, the baptismal service of the Church of England requires the minister "to dip" the candidate "in the water !" And shall we not add, how few there are who when pressed with the *harmony of opinion*, alleged to exist among the great concourse of learned, pious, and distinguished *pedobaptists*, are aware that this supposed harmony is a *delusion* ; that while all are agreed to *practise* infant baptism, there were few who agreed together in the *principle* of that practice ; that Wall, Selden, and Hammond, adhere to it on one ground, Knatchbull on another ; that Vitringa, Venema, and Witsius, differ from these, and Prideaux, and Heidegger from them ; that Baxter, Henry, and Leighton, all differed from one another and from the rest ;

that Calvin, Melancthon, and the Lutheran churches have their peculiar view, and the Church of England theirs ; and that when even this catalogue is told, the varieties of opinion are not exhausted ! May we not well ask a pedobaptist who trusts to great names, which of these shall be his master ? and what has become of the imposing argument of their *harmony of sentiment* ? These things ought not merely to stifle the breath of calumny and reproach, they ought to lead, and we humbly hope they will, to serious reflection, and a careful examination of the oracles of God.

CHAPTER III.

APPEAL TO CHRISTIANS TO COMBINE FOR THE FORMATION OF A SPIRITUAL CHURCH.

If the views presented in the preceding pages are scriptural and sound, our religious readers, to whose consciences we hope they have been commended as the truth of God, are solemnly bound to render immediate and unqualified obedience to the institution of their Saviour, by a public profession of their faith in baptism. It is their pressing duty to do this, because he has commanded it ; but the duty becomes more pressing, and its claims are urged more loudly, when we see its intimate connection with the spirituality of the church ; and, consequently, with the advancement of true religion on the earth.—The church is called in scripture, “the house of God.” the pillar and ground of the Truth ; but it only deserves that name while it contains and supports the Truth, not merely in rituals and ancient volumes whose precepts are disregarded, but in its active discipline ; in the holy lives and conversation of its members ; in the piety and faithfulness of its Teachers. Without holiness no man can see the Lord : without the love of God in the heart no community can be a church : if we do not love Christ we love the world ; but “the friendship of the world is enmity against God ;” “for, all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world ;” and can that be a church of God the majority of whose members are at enmity with him ?

And now, dear reader, lift up your eyes and look around you ; ask yourself if you are united to a company of real believers, “who count all things but loss so that they may win Christ, and be found in him, not having on their own righteousness,

but the righteousness which is of God by faith?" Do you with them form a *spiritual church*? If it be not spiritual, remember, it deserves not the name. It is *not* a church, but the world in its most offensive form, that of self-righteousness—"having the form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof." Alas! we know, too well, that many of our readers look in vain for the marks of the true church of Christ. And if we should ask how it is that these marks have become obliterated, can we be at any loss for an answer? We gravely, and yet tenderly towards those pious pedobaptists who differ from us, must charge it on infant baptism.

Infant baptism, (and this, *no one can deny*,) has introduced into the *professed church* of Christ, of almost every denomination, multitudes of persons who have grown up in it, without regeneration of heart—without repentance—without faith—without any real religious character; hence, any truly pious person, instead of finding himself in the bosom of a community of christians who truly love, and watch, and pray for one another; finds himself, in most instances, in the midst of those, who practice or allow many vices and bad habits altogether inconsistent with christian principle; so that even at the table of the Lord will often be found persons who, without rebuke, live the most scandalous, or, to say the least, the most worldly lives. There are the proud, the ambitious, the sensual—there are the "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God"—there are those who live in almost open enmity with one another—the backbiter, the tale bearer, the spiteful—nay, there are those even, who *deride* spiritual religion, who count it *enthusiasm, fanaticism, abominable heresy!* What a sight is this! a soul "born of God," kneeling or seated together with the open "worshippers of Baal," at what is professed to be the supper of the Lord, thus holding the closest possible fellowship with those who by denying spiritual religion, *in effect* deny the Lord that bought them! Ought these things to be? Are they to continue for ever? Is there no remedy? Yes there is a remedy and only one—and that is SEPARATION. Where the majority of the members of a church are of the character described, such discipline as would exclude the unworthy is impossible, and separation becomes an imperative duty. "Come out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord." If ever this command applies, it is here. A courteous intercourse with worldly and even vicious people is not forbidden in scripture, "for else" says the apostle Paul "ye must needs go out of the world;" but nothing can be more peremptory than the language of the same apostle in forbidding

communion at the Lord's table with persons of vicious lives—"If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous—or a drunkard, &c. ; with such a one no *not to eat*," is his direction. He extends this even to those who are disorderly, and rebel against the regulations of the churches. "*Withdraw*," says he, from every brother that walketh disorderly.

There is a solemn passage of scripture contained in 2. Tim. iii. 1—5, on which we beseech our religious readers seriously to ponder ; "this know ye," says the apostle, "that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God ; having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof : from such turn away." Can you, dear brethren, read this language, and fail to perceive, that *these* are plainly the perilous times of which the apostle speaks ; when, even at the table of the meek and lowly Jesus, are permitted those who realize *every feature* of that sad picture ? Can any thing, then, be more authoritative on you than the apostle's closing words, "from such turn away ?"

Indeed, the Saviour himself clearly recognized this principle in alluding to the proper manner of treating private injuries (see Matt. xviii. 15—18.) "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone : if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, TELL IT UNTO THE CHURCH : but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." A truly pious christian will readily feel that if private offences call for this discipline, much more does irreligious character or conduct demand the same. Shall a christian be thus careful to seek from his brother redress of a private injury, and shall he be indifferent to those things which discover him to be either wanting or remiss in christian principle ? Shall he be concerned for his own temporal affairs, and have no solicitude for the soul of his fellow being ? Nothing can be clearer than the law of Christ, as declared in the above passage, that the church ought to regard and treat "as heathen men and Publicans" these who persist in wrong doing. But how ought heathen men and Publicans to be treated ; not with unkindness and severity, certainly ; for the apostolic rule is "be courteous to all men ;"

but in such a manner as *shall not recognize them as christians*. We regret that we have not room to collect a multitude of scriptures that point to the same duty, and establish it as firmly, and render it as obligatory, as any act of obedience which christians owe their Divine Master.

Now, if the principles of Baptists—nay, the principles of the Bible, were strictly adhered to, and none were baptized but those who first gave credible proof of their genuine repentance and faith; it is evident, that, although mistakes like that respecting Simon Magus might still occur, yet the churches could never be *overrun* with unworthy members. All that would be necessary in such cases would be *occasional* discipline, in compliance with the command of the Saviour in Matt. 18; but the *neglect* of these principles has suffered such multitudes of men without faith, and who even deride spiritual religion, to enter the churches, that in the present state of things to talk of *discipline* is utterly nugatory.

Let the pious people and ministers who in various parts of the world groan under the consequences of their connexion with church members, or their subjection to ecclesiastical superiors, avowedly hostile to *evangelical* religion, bethink themselves of the subject and the duty of discipline with solemn prayer and a spirit of obedience; let them, impressed with the necessity of making an effort at reform, resolve to commence it, in the mode pointed out by the Saviour; and the very foremost offender with whom any one thus situated must expostulate, may be, the *leading man* of his congregation, *his elder, his minister, or his bishop*: and the disease stops not there, he looks further and finds, perhaps, nine-tenths, or more, of the whole church in a similar condition; worldly in their lives, and opposed in their *avowed* opinions, to the vital truths of the Gospel: he expostulates with them all, himself, perhaps, a poor and despised individual—his success, unless a *miracle* of grace attend him, every one will anticipate—he is laughed at as a visionary! And is he therefore to continue giving his countenance to those who by their principles and lives in effect deny the Lord Jesus Christ? No, we repeat our solemn conviction, that the duty of such a man is to *COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM*; yes, though he should remain *alone*. Despised and obscure as he may be; let him remember that the eye of God beholds him; in His sight he is neither obscure nor despised; and HE expects from him faithfulness to the cause of truth, though the whole community where he dwells—though the whole world—though a thousand worlds—were opposed.

In the present acknowledged condition of the great majo-

rity of Protestant communities, the only possible remedy of existing evils is for religious persons to separate from them, and to form distinct churches on the model of the scriptures. Even Hooker himself admits clearly this principle, "If whole communities," says he, "are [in such a condition that discipline cannot be enforced] the apostolic rule is "come out from among them and be separate;" and it may well be questioned whether even in his day: the application of the principle was not as requisite as at the present time.

If it is really the desire of our readers to promote the interests of true religion we now earnestly press on them the duty of putting this rule into practice. The only church which Jesus Christ recognizes is that which consists of his sincere disciples, and we entreat you, dear brethren, to consider whether you can possibly be justified in continuing to walk in church fellowship with those who, amiable though they may be on many accounts, yet habitually dispise and trample on some of the most precious truths of the Gospel, and spurn those who obey them. Can you bear the thought, that while some who love the Saviour have "gone forth to him without the camp, bearing his reproach," you who have witnessed their faithfulness and their sacrifices shall remain behind, crouching under the shelter of the God of this world—giving all your countenance and aid to those who love not *evangelical* religion—and refusing your help to those, who, in your consciences you believe to be the true "followers of the Lamb."

A *pure communion*—so far as is consistent with the infirmity which still cleaves to man, even when under the influence of the Holy Ghost—is one of the objects which is absolutely essential to the advancement of the cause of God on Earth; without this Zion will never "arise and shine." But another object equally essential is *pure doctrine*—"sound speech that cannot be condemned." With what uncompromising severity does the Saviour denounce the erroneous teaching of his day. "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites." "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." And addressing his disciples, how solemnly does he caution them against false teachers; "beware" says he "of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees;" "beware of false prophets;" and he gives it as a characteristic of his people that they *will not listen* to such; "my sheep," says he, "hear my voice, but the voice of strangers *will they not hear*;" and even the beloved disciple John, gentle as he was, possessing so much warm benevolence, so much of the lovely character of the divine master on whose bosom he had

been accustomed to recline, can nevertheless give no quarter to those who oppose the truth; speaking of such a one, he says, "receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." The error to which he particularly alludes is a denial of the divinity of Christ; but is it a less error to deny justification by faith alone; the power of the Holy Ghost; the necessity of regeneration, of that complete change of principle and life which constitutes a true conversion; the joy and peace and assurance of pardon which are the fruits of the Spirit and the privilege of the Christian? We must confess ourselves utterly at a loss to understand how it is, that so many worthy, and apparently pious, people can so quietly sit, from year to year, under doctrine which, as they themselves complain, is not that of the Gospel of Christ; how they can close their ears to the piercing cry from heaven respecting the true disciples of the Saviour, "THE VOICE OF STRANGERS WILL THEY NOT HEAR." But however this is to be accounted for, most solemnly assured we are, that their error cannot be justified; and that, much as many of them oftentimes wish to see the growth of true religion around them; much as they desire and pray for the conversion of their friends and relatives; nothing can be operating more directly and powerfully to oppose and defeat their own wishes and prayers, than the two evils we have named; their connection with a communion the *constitution* of which is radically wrong, and where no scriptural discipline is, or can be, exercised; and their continued attendance on public teaching where any of the essential truths of Christianity are either neglected, or not insisted on with the earnestness, and the practical, and close application to the conscience, that none but a truly evangelical minister will commonly employ.

There are no arbitrary enactments in the law of Christ; that is, every thing which God has ordained is essential to some important benefit which will result from it; it is not merely right, because He has commanded it; but it is right, also, because of the good it is calculated to do. This is unquestionable true with respect to the subject we now treat of. A pure or spiritual communion is essential to many important blessings. Without it, it cannot be expected and will rarely happen, that the pulpit will preach plainly and powerfully the doctrines of Christ. The saying is as true now as in the days of Hosea; "there shall be, like people, like priest." Without it, there cannot be produced on the world that commanding religious influence which Christianity is intended to exercise. Example is powerful, and so is *combined* example; "a city which is set on a hill cannot be hid." The influence of a consistent christian

in the retired walks of life has, unquestionably, a powerful and wholesome effect on the world, but the influence of a number such *professedly* united for the maintenance of the cause of the Redeemer in the earth will be much stronger. If "union is strength" in temporal things, so is it in spiritual.

Why does Christendom present the aspect of a region scorched and withered with blasting and mildew, rather than that of the garden, the beauteous "heritage," of the Lord, while his name is disgraced by the pretended worship of millions of false disciples? Why has the finger of contempt and scorn so often been pointed by the heathens of India against the self-styled Christians that ruled them with an iron rod, and rioted in vices and abominations that rivalled their own worst excesses? Why has religion been driven from so many lordly establishments, and pale and persecuted, taken her refuge under the scorned shelter of dissenting chapels, while multitudes yet lingered around the carcass she had deserted, as if life and motion might yet appear in full vigour in a body in which the vital spark was all but extinct? To all these interrogations we answer in the confidence of truth, the unhallowed alliance of christians with worldly, *unconverted* people in the holiest of all connections—the church of God—is the cause to a vast extent of all these evils. Let Zion but *arise*, and she shall *shine*; let her continue *sunk* in the profanation of interdicted and unlawful communion, and she must still continue to be "shorn of her strength."

It is strange that so much shuddering is manifested at the performance of the duty we now urge as if instead of a duty it were a crime, when all we ask is, that the real disciples of Christ should *complete* that good work which the Reformation *only commenced*. A loud cry of schism is often raised by the very communities who, if separation from evil doctrine and practice be schism, were long ago, as churches, convicted of this crime in their separation from the Romish body. And were not the Reformers—was not Luther—Calvin—Bucer—Zuinglius—Latimer—Ridley—Hooper—Rogers—in fact, as heavily, and as reasonably, charged with schism, as those would be who at the present day should, with equal boldness and determination, oppose and separate from all who deny or neglect any of the vital truths of Christianity?

The truth is, however, *Reformation* was commenced long before the days of Luther. For centuries before that period, had Satan rioted in a community in which, while claiming the christian name, all the lineaments of the Saviour were obliterated, and on which were stamped the broadest features of Anti-

christ. It is not to Rome and her legates, her cardinals and popes, her bulls and manifestoes, that we must look for the followers or the precepts of Jesus of Nazareth, those were their worst and bitterest enemies; while, concealed in the fastnesses of the Alps, or obscurely scattered amidst the retired vallies of France and Bohemia, lay those, whose blood was continually sealing their own faithfulness to Christ, and proclaiming the true character of their Romish Persecutors. Do you ask then where was the Church of Christ in the middle ages? Let the various tribes of the Waldenses, baptist or pedobaptist, answer. *They were themselves the true church of Christ.* They early and long stood aloof from the abominations of secularized and apostate Rome; and it is their good example, in this noble separation, which we now earnestly and affectionately press on our readers to imitate, by a similar separation from secularized and apostate Protestantism. We do not, now, so much urge baptism, however important we deem obedience to this ordinance, but we say, if you have any real regard to your Saviour, at least cease to have "fellowship" with the "unfruitful works of darkness"—uphold not the hands of those who do not love the Lord—bid not "God speed" to those who, even as *public teachers*, perhaps, neglect and condemn many of the most essential truths of the Gospel, and deride as enthusiasts those that love and obey them; *come out from among them*, and of whatever denomination of Christians you may count yourselves, and however small your numbers and feeble your means, unite with all who are of like temper, for the establishment of the only sort of community which Christ recognizes as a church, *a company of spiritual worshippers.*

When the thought of so bold a step as separation enters your mind, it is at once accompanied, possibly, with sad images of grieved or angry friends; the shout and sneer of ridicule; perhaps positive persecution: but do you hope in Christ, and yet fear such things as these? When those among whom you dwell raise the loud outcry of *schism! schism!* you are perhaps apprehensive, lest by separation you will commit sin, and wound Christ's body the church. But will you not give heed rather to Christ's words than to man's. How can your withdrawing from an *irreligious* society be a wounding of the body of Christ? His body, the church, is a society of *faithful* men: are those faithful men who, not only do not possess, but even deny *vital godliness*? Schism is a division among *real* christians on *needless* grounds, and is certainly a sin: the separation, of which we speak, is the escape of christians from *religious* fellowship with those who neither acknowledge nor

practise the vital truths of God's word and is a paramount duty. You pray for the increase of Christ's kingdom ; you sigh for the conversion of your friends and relatives ; you are burthened with countless difficulties and obstructions in your present course, and cry for deliverance ; but you take not the means which God has put into your hands. He has declared his church to be the pillar and ground of the truth. Form such a church as the new Testament describes, and see whether God does not make it "a pillar and ground"—a strong foundation, on which he will proceed to build, until your hearts shall rejoice in beholding many a "lively stone," brought, by the power of divine grace, to form a part of "this house of God." The spirit of grace and glory shall then rest upon you, and God will get to himself a glorious name. We say to you repent and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus ; but we would, if it were possible, cry to you with a yet louder voice, "Escape from the world which lies in wickedness, escape for thy life, stay not in all the plain !"

In conclusion we beg our readers to believe that while we have felt strongly and have endeavoured therefore strongly to express our deep sense of the duty here urged, we have done so with the kindest possible feelings towards those who differ from us. We are not conscious of having "set down aught in malice," but are guided, we are assured, by a sincere desire to promote the advancement of true religion. We again repeat that towards many pedobaptists we entertain the sentiment of warm and firmly rooted christian regard—towards all men we entertain the most perfect friendliness, and desire cheerfully to walk with them in all the amenities and courtesies of life—but in the Church of Christ, and in the participation of its holy ordinances, we dare hold fellowship with none but those whom, in the exercise of the most christian and charitable judgment, we believe the Saviour has *sealed* as his sincere disciples.

THE END.

NOTE A.

The improbability that if infants were baptized by the apostles all mention of them would be omitted in every case of baptism recorded in the New Testament, becomes stronger when the usage of scripture in other cases is considered. Wherever children are known to have been interested, it appears to be the invariable practice to mention them, see for instance Genesis xliii. 8. "And Judah said unto Israel his father, send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live and not die, both we and thou, and also our *little ones*." Deuteronomy ii. 34. "And we took all his cities at that time, and utterly destroyed the men and the women and the *little ones*, of every city we left none to remain;" so also iii. chap. 6 v. See likewise Joshua viii. 35. "There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women and the *little ones*, and the strangers that were conversant among them." 1. Samuel xxii. 19. "And Nob the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, both men and women, *children and sucklings*, and oxen and asses and sheep." 2. Chronicles xx. 13. "And all Judah stood before the Lord, with their *little ones*, their wives, and their *children*." Ezra x. 1. "Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men and women and *children*." Jeremiah xl. 7. "Now when all the captains — heard that the King of Babylon had — committed unto him men, women and *children*." Matthew xiv. 21. "And they that had eaten were about five thousand men besides women and *children*." It seems indeed almost the invariable practice of scripture to mention children in those cases where they are concerned, and as the style of the writers of the New Testament is well known to be formed on the model of the Old, it is almost impossible to believe that in every one of the frequent occasions when the performance of the ordinance is spoken of, all mention of infants should be omitted, except on the ground of their not having partaken of this rite. This reasoning applies with peculiar force to that instance at Samaria, Acts viii. 12. where the phraseology, "both men and women," so evidently resembles the style of the Old Testament, as quoted above—and where the enumeration of the classes of persons who received baptism, leads so naturally to the third class—children. When too, "there went out unto John all the land of Judæa, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in Jordan confessing their sins," if their infants were also baptized, there must have been a great multitude of them, how came they to be omitted by the historian? It would have been easy and natural to have said "and confessing their sins, were all baptized of him in Jordan together with their little ones." On the Pentecostal occasion likewise, how great a multitude of children must have been connected with the three thousand souls who were then added to the Church, yet there is no mention of infants whatever, as being baptized; an omission the more extraordinary if the words "the promise is unto you and to your children," did indeed allude to baptism. If the baptism of the infant children of believers were thus, as some of our Pedobaptist friends suppose, already in the mind of the sacred historian, how very extraordinary appears his silence respecting them. When relating the fact of baptism, how easy to have said "as many as gladly received the word were baptized together with their children." The baptisms by Paul at Corinth, Acts xviii. 4. and at Ephesus, Acts xix. 1. as well as many other cases, are all subject to the same remark; all these cases, are silent as to the baptism of any children of the persons who then received the ordinance at the hands of the apostles, and yet all afforded a fine opportunity to mention them, if the fact indeed occurred.

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ERRATA.

- Page 12, line 1, between the words "the" and "sense," read "Jewish."
- " 19, " 23, after the word "inquiry," add, "with the exception of two instances (Rom. vi. 3, and Colos. ii. 11, 12,) which on account of their important bearing on the mode of baptism, will be examined hereafter, see page 113."
- " 24, " 16, after the word "subjects," add, "except the two additional cases of allusion (Rom. vi. 3, and Colos. ii. 11, 12,) examined hereafter on page 113, and which are to the same import."
- " 61, last line, instead of "a connection," read "any authorised connection."
- " 87, line 1, for "so," read "while."
- " 96, first and last line, for "Nazianzen," read "Nazianzen."
- " " line 1, after "Gregory Nazianzen," add "Bishop of Constantinople."
- " " " 8, for "answer," read "ask."
- " 127, " 11, for "have," read "leave."
- " 134, " 30, for "easy," read "easily."
- " 138, " 20, for "misquoted," read "has quoted."
- " 147, " 3, for "predictions," read "prediction."
- " 159, " 24, for "imperious," read "imperative."
- " 163, " 38, for "4000," read "upwards of 6000."
- " 164, In two places for "conscientiously," and "conscientious," read "conscientiously" and "conscientious."
- " 165, " 24, for "imperious," read "imperative."
- " 166, " 31, for "these," read "those."
- " 170, " 16, for "conscientiously," read "conscientiously."
- " 176, " 40, for "maintainance," read "maintenance."
- " 182, " 13, for "fostered," read "feasted."
- " 185, " 3, for "labour," read "design."

Our readers will excuse the large amount of errata, when they understand that in consequence of a multiplicity of avocations, we were under the necessity of putting each sheet to press nearly as soon as it was written, and long before the whole work was complete.

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